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THE THEOSOPHIST

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THE THEOSOPHIST

ON THE WATCH-TOWER

ALL the world over is the tumult of War ; the lurid light of devastated homes blazes out from the burning towns of Belgium ; the relics of past ages in Louvain and Rheims and Dinant have been hammered into pieces by the new hammer of Thor ; hundreds of thousands of men, killed or wounded, strew the fields that should have been yellowing for the sickle ; all the fair peaceful industries of common life are whelmed in one red ruin.

*
* *

And for what is all this pain, this agony of wrenched muscles and shattered limbs, this blasting of bright young lives, this destruction of glowing hopes ? In the pictures of the killed that appear in the illustrated papers, there are so many faces glad with the sunshine of life, bright faces of young manhood, dawning into virility, faces that mothers must have loved so dearly, must have kissed so passionately as they sent them forth. As one looks at them, one sees them trampled into crimson mud, shattered by bursting shell, riven by cut of sabre, and is glad that the earth should hide the horror of what was once so fair. Clear eyes, looking

out so brightly upon joyous life, that have gazed unflinchingly into the eyes of death. Lips, still showing the gracious curves of youth, that hardened in the battle-crash, to relax again only in the peace of death.

*
* *

And all for what? For what the broken hearts in all the homes in which these gallant lads were light and joy? For what the anguish of the widows of these other men, beyond the first flush of youth, who left behind them their life's treasure, with the children who shall watch for their fathers' coming, useless watching, for homeward he will never come again? For what the myriads of darkened homes, whose breadwinners, husbands and sons, fathers and lovers, find no record in the pictured pages, though dear to the hearts that love them as are the noble and the wealthy who thereon have their place? For what the world's great anguish, mourning over her slaughtered sons? For what?

*
* *

There have been wars begun for transient objects, for the conquest of a piece of land, for the weakening of a rival, for the gaining of added power, begun because of ambition, of greed, of jealousy, of insult. In such wars, lives are flung away for trifles, though the men who suffer in them or who die, win out of their own anguish added strength and beauty of character, full reward for the pain endured; for they return with the spoils of victory into new avenues of ascending life, and with them it is very well. Such wars are evil in their origin, however much the divine alchemy may transmute the base into fine gold.

*
* *

But this War is none of these. In this War mighty Principles are battling for the Mastery. Ideas are locked in deadly combat. The direction of the march of our present civilisation, upwards or downwards, depends on the issue of the struggle. Two Ideals of World-Empire are balanced on the scales of the future. That is what raises this War above all others known in the brief history of the West ; it is the latest of the pivots on which, in successive ages, the immediate future of the world has turned. To die, battling for the Right, is the gladdest fate that can befall the youth in the joy of his dawning manhood, the man in the pride of his strength, the elder in the wisdom of his maturity, aye, and the aged in the rich splendour of his whitened head. To be wounded in this War is to be enrolled in the ranks of Humanity's Warriors, to have felt the stroke of the sacrificial knife, to bear in the mortal body the glorious scars of an immortal struggle.

*
* *

Of the two possible World-Empires, that of Great Britain and that of Germany, one is already far advanced in the making and shows its quality, with Dominions and Colonies, with India at its side. The other is but in embryo, but can be judged by its theories, with the small examples available as to the fashion of their out-working in the few Colonies that it is founding, the outlining of the unborn embryo.

*
* *

The first embodies—though as yet but partially realised—the Ideal of Freedom ; of ever-increasing Self-Government ; of Peoples rising into power and self-development along their own lines ; of a Supreme Government “broad-based upon the People's Will” ; of

fair and just treatment of undeveloped races, aiding not enslaving them; it embodies the embryo of the splendid Democracy of the Future; of the New Civilisation, co-operative, peaceful, progressive, artistic, just, and free—a Brotherhood of Nations, whether the Nations be inside or outside the World-Empire. This is the Ideal; and that Great Britain has set her feet in the path which leads to it is proved, not only by her past interior history with its struggles towards Liberty, but also by her granting of autonomy to her Colonies, her formation of the beginnings of Self-Government in India, her constantly improving attitude towards the undeveloped races—as in using the Salvation Army to civilise the criminal tribes in India—all promising advances towards the Ideal. Moreover, she has ever sheltered the oppressed exiles, flying to her shores for refuge against their tyrants—the names of Kossuth, Mazzini, Kropotkin, shine out gloriously as witnesses in her favour; she has fought against the slave-trade and wellnigh abolished it. And at the present moment she is fighting in defence of keeping faith with those too small to exact it; in defence of Treaty obligations and the sanctity of a Nation's pledged word; in defence of National Honour, of Justice to the weak, of that Law, obedience to which by the strong States is the only guarantee of future Peace, the only safeguard of Society against the tyranny of brute Strength. For all this England is fighting, when she might have stood aside, selfish and at ease, watching her neighbours tearing each other into pieces, waiting until their exhaustion made it possible for her to impose her will. Instead of thus remaining, she has sprung forward, knight-errant of Liberty, servant of Duty. With possible danger of Civil War behind her, with

supposed possible revolt in South Africa and India, with shameful bribes offered for her standing aside, she spurned all lower reasonings, and, springing to her feet, sent out a lion's roar of defiance to the breakers of treaties, uttered a ringing shout for help to her peoples, flung her little army to the front—a veritable David against Goliath—to gain time, time, that the hosts might gather, to hold the enemy back at all costs, let die who might of her children; called for men to her standard, men from the nobles, from the professions, from the trades, men from the plough, from the forge, from the mine, from the furnace; and this not for gain—she has naught to gain from the War—but because she loved Liberty, Honour, Justice, Law, better than life or treasure, that she counted glorious Death a thousandfold more desirable than shameful existence bought by cowardly ease. For this, the Nations bless her; for this, her dying Sons adore her; for this, History shall applaud her; for this, shall the World-Empire be hers with the consent of all Free Peoples, and she shall be the Protector, not the Tyrant, of Humanity.

* * *

The second claimant of World-Empire embodies the Ideal of Autocracy founded on Force. The candidate proclaims himself the War-Lord, and in his realm no Master save himself; he declares to his army, as he flings his sword into the scales of War:

Remember that the German people are the chosen of God. On me, on me, as German Emperor, the Spirit of God has descended. I am His weapon, His sword, and His Vicegerent. Woe to the disobedient. Death to cowards and unbelievers.

The thinkers, the teachers of his people, have formulated the theory of the World-Empire; it recognises no law in dealing with States save that of Strength,

no arbitrament save War. Its own self-interest is declared to be its only motive; its morality is based on the increase of the Power of its Empire; the weak have no rights; the conquered nations must be "left only eyes to weep with"; woe to the conquered! woe to the weak! woe to the helpless! all religions save the Religion of Force are superstitious, their morality is outgrown. Murder, robbery, arson—all are permissible, nay, praiseworthy, in invading hosts. Mercy is contemptible. Chivalry is an anachronism. Compassion is feebleness. Art and Literature have no sanctity. The women, the children, the aged—they are all weak; why should not strong men use them as they will? All undeveloped races are the prey of the "civilised". And we are not left without signs of the application of the theory. Herr Schlettwein instructs the German Reichstag on the "principles of colonisation":

The Hereros must be compelled to work, and to work without compensation and in return for their food only. Forced labour for years is only a just punishment, and at the same time it is the best method of training them. The feelings of Christianity and philanthropy, with which the missionaries work, must for the present be repudiated with all energy.

General von Trotha, tired even of enslaving them, proclaims:

The Herero people must now leave the land. If it refuses I shall compel it with the gun. Within the German frontier every Herero, with or without weapon, with or without cattle, will be shot. I shall take charge of no more women and children, but shall drive them back to their people or let them be shot at.

The proclamation was carried out; thousands were shot; thousands were "driven into a waterless desert, where they perished of hunger and thirst". On this sample, we refuse the goods offered. Moreover,

we have seen the Empire at work, carrying out in Belgium its theories of murder, rape, and loot. The "chosen people of the [German] God" stink in the nostrils of Europe. This embryo-Empire of the bottomless Pit, conceived of Hatred and shaped in the womb Ambition, must never come to the birth. It is the New Barbarism; it is the antithesis of all that is noble, compassionate, and humane. Humanity knows the ways of Goths, Vandals and Huns, the Berserker rage of the Vikings; it refuses to bow down before the Idol of Force, the Negation of Law, of Freedom, of Justice and of Peace. They that make the sword the arbitrament shall perish by the sword. The War Germany has provoked, as her road to Empire, shall crush her Militarism, free her people, and usher in the reign of Peace.

*
* *

Because these things are so, because the fate of the next Age of the World turns on the choice made now by the Nations, I call on all who are pledged to Universal Brotherhood, all Theosophists the world over, to stand for Right against Might, Law against Force, Freedom against Slavery, Brotherhood against Tyranny.

*
* *

Very good work is being done in England by our members. We may note, especially, the starting of a workroom for women, by Mrs. Charles Kerr; Dr. Haden Guest's organisation of an ambulance with a number of Theosophical nurses and bearers; Miss Green's Employment Bureau for Women affected by the War, which has now expanded into the Mayoress' of Southampton's Committee under the Queen's Work for

Women Fund, which has the following remarkable composition :

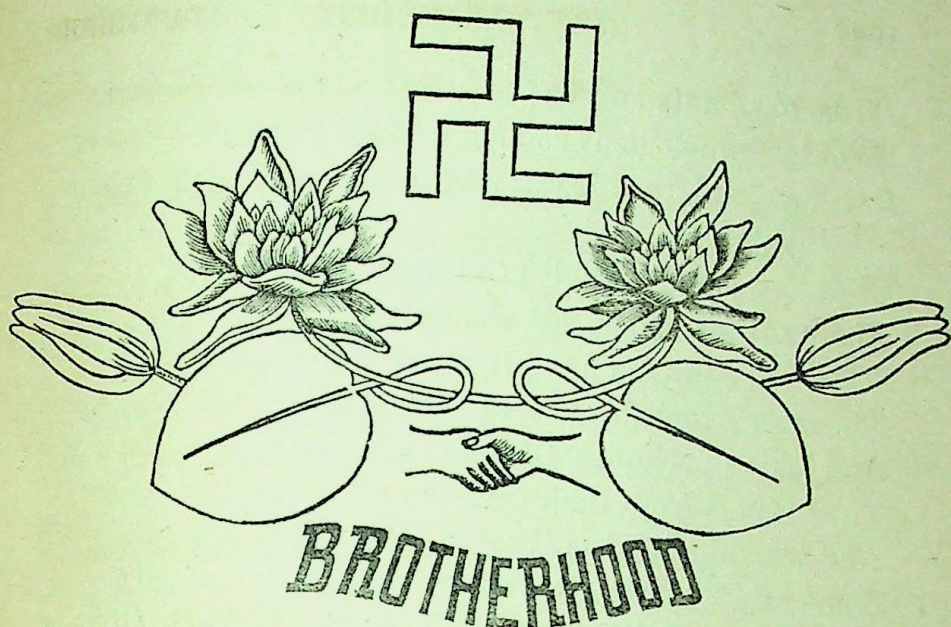
Chairman : President of the local Theosophical Lodge.

Hon. Sec. : Lecturer, Higher Thought Centre.

Hon. Treas. : Church of England, Parish worker. Rest of Members from the following organisations :

Economic	{ Board of Guardians Trade's Council Labour Bureau Women's Co-op. Guild Charity Organisation Watch Committee Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Associa-	[tion
Religious	{ Church of England (Clergy) Roman Catholic Free Churches Salvation Army United Temperance Councils	
Political	{ Conservative Liberal Unionist Independent Labour Party Women's Suffrage Societies	

Miss Bothwell Gosse is appointed Medical Officer, with a Red Cross Detachment, to a large district lying north of Plymouth.



THE BUDDHA'S DAILY LIFE¹

By F. L. WOODWARD, M.A.

Ah ! When the Lord of the World went forth to beg,
 The gentle winds made smooth the ways before Him,
 The clouds poured down their waters on the dust
 And from the sun's hot rays protected Him.
 The breezes wafted flowers to His path,
 Raised were the ruts and hollows of the road,
 Smoothed the rough places, and where'er the Lord
 Trod, even was the ground and soft ; thereon
 Sprang lotus-flowers to receive His feet.
 No sooner had He reached the city-gates
 Than all the six-rayed brilliance² of His form
 Raced here and there o'er palaces and shrines
 And decked them as with yellow sheen of gold
 Or with a painter's colours. Then the beasts,

¹ Being a literal and metrical version of Buddhaghosa's *Sumangala-Vitasini*, (I.45) or Commentary on the Digha Nikāya of Sutta Pitaka.

² The *Buddha-Vanna*—or Buddha-aura—whose colours are *nīla*, *pīṭa*, *lohita*, *manjettho*, *pabhassaro*, blue, yellow, crimson, white, orange, radiant.

Birds, elephants and horses, one and all,
 Gave forth melodious sounds, and all the folk
 Crashed loud the drums; lutes twanged and instru-
 ments

Of divers sounds; tinkled the women's jewels :

And by these tokens did the people know

"The Blessed One has entered now for alms."

So donning their best robes and finery

And taking perfumes, flowers and offerings

They issued from their houses to the street,

And worshipping the Blessed One therewith

Some said "Lord! Give us ten monks for to feed,"

And some "Give twenty," some "Lord! Give a
 hundred!"

And then they took His bowl, prepared a seat,

And eagerly their reverence displayed

By placing choicest food within the bowl.

Now when the meal was done, the Blessed Lord

With nice discrimination of their minds

And dispositions, taught each one the Doctrine.

Thus, some were stablished in the Refuges,

Some in the Precepts Five, some reached the Stream.

While others would attain the Second Path,

And some the Path of No-Return, and some

Became established in the Highest Fruit,

Were Arahans and left the world. Thus showing

Such kindness to the folk the Lord would rise;

Back to His dwelling-place would wend His way.

And there when He arrived He sat Him down

On a fair Buddha-mat they spread for Him,

And waited till the monks their meal had eaten.

This done, the body-servant told the Lord,

And to the scented chamber He retired.
Such were the duties of the morning meal.

These duties done, in the scented chamber sitting
On a seat made ready, He would wash His feet.
Then, standing on the jewelled stairs that led
Unto the scented chamber, He would teach
The gathering of monks and thus would say :
"O monks ! Apply yourselves with diligence !
For rarely comes a Buddha in the world,
And rarely beings come to birth as men ;
Rare the propitious moment and the chance
To leave the world and hear the Doctrine true !"

Thereat some one would ask the Blessed One
For meditation-lessons, which He gave
Fit for each man's peculiar bent of mind.
Then all would do obeisance and depart
To places where they spent the night or day ;
Some to the forest, some to the foot of trees,
Some to the hills, some to the heavens where rule
The Four Great Kings,¹ or Vasivatti's heaven.²
Then going to His room, the Blessed One
Would lay Him down and rest there for a while,
Mindful and conscious, on His right side lying,
Like a lion ; till, His body now refreshed,
He rose and gazed forth over all the world.
Then came the folk of village or of town—
Near which He might be staying, they who gave
The morning meal, garbed in their best, and brought
Their offerings of flowers and scents. The Lord,

¹ The Four Mahārājas.

² *Vasivatti*—a name of Māra—the Archangel of Evil—who rules the highest
of the six Kāmaḍevalokas (domains of sense) along with Sakka (Indra).

His audience, thus assembled, would approach
 In such miraculous fashion as was fit;
 And sitting in the lecture-hall prepared
 On the fair Buddha-mat they spread for Him,
 He taught the Doctrine fit for time and season,
 And seasonably bade the people go.
 Then all would do obeisance and depart.
 Such were the duties of the afternoon.

These things all done, He left the Buddha-seat,
 Entering the bath-house, if He wished to bathe
 And cool His limbs with water there prepared
 By His body-servant, who fetched the Buddha-seat
 And spread it in the scented room. The Lord,
 Donning His double tunic orange-hued
 And binding on His girdle, threw His robe
 O'er the right shoulder and thither went and sat
 And stayed retired, in meditation plunged.
 Then came the monks from this side and from that
 And waited on the Blessed One. Some asked
 The solving of their doubts, and some would beg
 For meditation-lessons, others a sermon.
 Thus answering, teaching, preaching, would the Lord
 Spend the first night-watch, granting their desires.
 Such were the duties of the first night-watch.

When the duties of the first night-watch were done,
 The monks would do obeisance and depart.
 Then came the Gods of the ten thousand worlds,
 Seizing the chance of questioning the Lord,
 Were it but single words of letters four.
 He, answering those questions, passed the night.
 Such were the duties of the middle watch.

Into three parts the last watch He divided ;
 And forasmuch as, since the morning sitting,
 His body would be tired, He spent one part
 In pacing up and down to ease His limbs.
 Then going to the scented room the Lord
 Would lay Him down and rest there for a while,
 Mindful and conscious, on His right side lying,
 Like a lion. But in the third He rose and sat,
 Gazing with Buddha-eye o'er all the world,
 To see if any man, by giving alms,
 Keeping the Precepts, or by deeds of worth,
 Under some former Buddha took the vow¹
 Himself to be a Saviour of the world.
 Such were His habits of the last night-watch.

F. L. Woodward

¹ *Panidhana* (Bodhāya panidhim akā) the aspiration for Buddhahood, one of the ten *Parāmitas* or Perfections, by fulfilling which a man becomes a Buddha.

HEIRS OF PROMETHEUS

AUGUST STRINDBERG

FROM CYNIC TO SEER

By LILY NIGHTINGALE

I remember Prometheus who storms at the Gods while the vulture gnaws his liver. And at last the rebel is admitted to the circle of the Olympians without making an open recantation.

THE above is a characteristically Strindbergian paraphrase of "the Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force". In *The Growth of a Soul* the same idea is elaborated, this time with a no less characteristic introduction of grim satire, bordering on cynicism :

The ancient poet is psychologically correct in representing Prometheus as having his liver gnawed by a vulture. Prometheus was the revolutionary who wished to spread mental illumination among men. Whether he did it from altruistic motives, or from the selfish one of wishing to breathe a purer mental atmosphere, may be left undecided. John was aware of a pain which resembled anxiety, and a perpetual boring toothache in the liver Was Prometheus then a liver patient who confusedly ascribed his pain to causes outside himself? Probably not! But he was certainly embittered when he saw that the world is a lunatic asylum in which the idiots go about as they like, and the few who preserve reason are watched as though dangerous to public safety.

As specimens of the type Titanic, Auguste Rodin and August Strindberg in their respective work (for the work of a man of genius represents his true individuality, the ego in manifestation) present two interestingly

antithetical variations—Rodin on the ascending, Strindberg on the descending arc. Rodin “raises the stone,” thereby freeing the fiery spirit imprisoned there, whereas Strindberg’s autobiographical records are so many shadows “of a soul on fire”; the body of this death was a prison to the mighty Spirit, and the conflict between genius and mortal instrument many a time dragged the man to the borderland of madness. The Song of Strindberg is a *De Profundis*, fraught with variations of cataclysmic significance. Even at the last, when the soul was above-ground, having won emergence through struggle, still the “lava” element is felt hissing below in the volcanic strata of his mind.

The most deeply individual work, that in which the mystic consciousness (*i.e.*, the suffusion of mental and spiritual) will be found in fullest working manifestation, is *A Blue Book*¹ which contains the essence of Strindberg’s philosophy, and the most truly catholic interpretation of the spirit of his teaching; for much of his work was didactic, being concerned with the spiritualisation of ethics.

The earnestness of the man is in proportion to his greatness, following Carlyle’s aphorism, that sincerity is the touchstone of genius, if it be colossal, not merely intense. We read in one of his autobiographical records :

At present I write a work called *The Island of the Dead*. In it, I describe the awakening after death, and what follows. But I hesitate, for I am frightened at the boundless misery of mere life. Lately I burned a drama; it was so sincere, that I shuddered at it. What I do not understand is this: ought one to hide the misery, and flatter men? I wish to write cheerfully and beautifully, but ought not and cannot. I conceive it as a terrible duty to be truthful, and life is indescribably hideous.

¹ Published 1907-8.

This phase of scorification of the sensibilities by the process of disillusion, comes to every idealist, sooner or later, and Strindberg was fundamentally an idealist, though at this period something of a cynic and more of a pessimist. He was in the grip of *Welt-Schmerz*, the traces whereof remained, though the grasp relaxed, before death; and the record of the ordeal will be found in *The Inferno*, perhaps the most poignant portrayal of mental torture revealed in literature. Parts are over the borderland of that which most psychologists would agree divides sanity from insanity. From a literary point of view its self-justification is complete, for the inferno-atmosphere is sustained throughout: it is a document of *infernal* lucidity; we feel the iron entering the soul; searing the brain; almost the writer persuades himself and the reader, that there is no hope for the over-tortured save the defeat that finds refuge in unconsciousness. It is an orgy of fiends, their cavern of revelry, Strindberg's mind. *The Inferno* is a book for students of morbid psychology, and is full of interest as a record of the truth that "all pains the immortal Spirit can endure," but it is not a book for those who suffer from timidity, nor for the hypersensitive, whose emotions overbalance intellectual interest in a document of human scorification.

What a victory for the Titan that can write after such an ordeal;

The ground must be harrowed, broken, and rolled, in order to be able to yield a crop; gold must be refined in the fire, and flax be steeped in water. The cross points upwards, downwards, sideways, to the four quarters of heaven at once; it is a completion of the compass. Suffering burns up the rubbish of the Soul. . . . Pain, unlike Pleasure, wears no mask. There are times when Sorrow seems to me to be the only truth. The secret of life is suffering.

This sentence is no hypothetical philosophy, but the utterance of one, saved indeed, but "so as by fire". Strindberg trod the way of fire, and before the end of the ordeal realised that the Lord of the Burning-ground is the Lord of earth-life. He saw, too, that delusions are dispersed, illusions broken, but that ideals are invulnerable: he is an example of the truth that extremes meet, for the mystic seer met and conquered the cynic in Strindberg. In common with many intense natures, his mind is more remarkable for depth than breadth; he could look up and down, but not all round, which is only to say that he had *les défauts de ses qualités*. He passed not only *through* Gehenna and its torments (none who read *The Inferno* can doubt that) but he passed *out and on*. A chastened worship of sorrow was the sacrifice of the agnostic to the seer in Strindberg. Elsewhere he says, in effect, that we escape from the tyranny of pain only by the endurance of utmost agony. Cowper, who endured torments of doubt and depression, conquered by fortitude and resignation, as Strindberg by courage and fighting with his daemonic furies, voices the same truth in a couplet of that didactic rhymed prose accepted as poetry by his compeers:

The path of Sorrow and that path alone,
Leads to a land where Sorrow is unknown.

Among his dramatic works, the most significant, from a psychological point of view, is *The Dream Play*, wherein the lion and the lamb, if they do not precisely lie down together, execute some creditably mutual gambols. The play presents a sardonic sketch of the conditions of earth-life, as viewed from the perspective of cosmic deva-consciousness. A daughter of Indra

descends to earth via the seventh Sign, Libra. Indra (Jupiter) thus addresses her :

You have withdrawn yourself to enter soon
The vapoury circle of the earth. For mark
The seventh house you take. It's Libra called :
There stands the day-star in the balanced hour
When Fall gives equal weight to night and day.

The daughter objects to the smoke and steam, and the sultry stench that assails her as she nears our sphere, remarking with colloquial directness : " Indeed, the best of worlds is not the third." Her father replies with Olympian impartiality :

The best I cannot call it, nor the worst,
Its name is Dust ; and like them all, it rolls :
And therefore dizzy sometimes grows the race,
And seems to be half foolish and half mad—
Take courage, child—a trial, that is all.

Whereupon the daughter descends, and goest through a cycle of half serious, wholly fantastic adventures; *the mise-en-scène* includes a castle that grew two yards where it was manured and put out a wing on the sunny side ! A glazier, a portress, and various minor characters are concerned in the working-out of her earth-experience. Finally, a " twisting " lawyer (who remarks " I twist " at varying intervals of extreme inconvenience to the " twisted ") and a ghastly " pasting lady " (who spends her existence pasting strips of paper over every available aperture where air or light might enter) drive the Goddess to desperation, and she escapes from " cabbage, washing-day and paste," to Fingall's Cave, in company with a Poet, the link between heaven and earth. In the cave, she interprets the voice of the Elements to the Poet, thus :

It was we, the winds,
Offspring of the air,
Who learned how to grieve
Within human breasts

Through which we passed.
 We waves, that are rocking the winds to rest—
 Green cradles. . . . Wet are we, and salt;
 Leap like flames of fire—
 Wet flames are we :
 Burning, extinguishing ;
 Cleansing, replenishing ;
 Bearing, engendering.
 We, we waves
 That are rocking the winds
 To rest.

But the twisting lawyer (her husband !) and the remainder of her earth-companions surround her again ; this becomes insupportable, even for “a trial, that is all,” and she re-ascends, her last farewell to the Poet :

Thou dreaming child of man,
 Thou singer, who alone knowest how to live !
 When from thy winged flight alove the earth
 At times thou sweepst downward to the dust
 It is to touch it only, not to stay

Farewell ! To all thy fellow-men make known
 That where I go I shall forget them not ;
 And in thy name their guidance shall be placed
 Before the throne—Farewell !

The play ends here, with the poetic stage direction :

The background is lit up by the burning castle, and reveals a wall of human faces, questioning, grieving, despairing. As the castle breaks into flames, the bud on the roof opens into a gigantic chrysanthemum.

The Dream Play is bathed in an atmosphere of mystic reality, the elements so thoroughly suffused that the unities are observed, and in the midst of all apparent incongruities, we feel that “it happened, and just like that”.

The Dance of Death is an example of a transition-period play.¹ An extraordinary and appalling drama, so “realistic” in style that it is more a clear literary

¹ 1901.

photograph than a work of art, yet tinged with a macabre and sombre mysticism, reminiscent of the Gothic Age: these flashes are only momentary, and the recurrent note is one of acrid realism. The force (both constructive and dynamic) of *The Dance of Death* is undeniable, but as a whole it lacks the simplicity and unity that distinguish the purely tragic from the pseudo-melodramatic. The principal character says: "It looks to me as if life were a tremendous hoax played on us all." We hear the rattle of the bones, as the skeletons perform their grim acrobatics. Yet hints are not wanting that there may be a purpose in it all, that the dance itself is perchance a prelude to "more Life and fuller," not an epilogue.

There is a taint of neurosis in the conception of this play, though the structural craftsmanship is sane and sound throughout. The morbid streak, which at times "sicklies o'er" his genius, with its "pale cast of thought," was yet a valuable element in his psychic education. Never was there more eloquent testimony to the necessity for the cathartic process of pain in the development of spiritual self-consciousness, the true *raison d'être* for all individualisation of life, than that recorded in the utterance: "Suffering burns up the rubbish of the soul."

The story of the surrender of the agnostic to the affirmative consciousness in Strindberg is the story of the triumph of that magnanimity of perspective inherent in all great souls. Towards the end of his *magnum opus*¹ he speaks of the rejuvenescence experienced with the dawning of spiritual self-consciousness.

¹ *The Blue Book*.

One does not feel old age to be the beginning of an end but the introduction to something new, *i.e.*, when one has recovered the belief or assurance that there is a life on the other side. One feels as though one were preparing for an examination by doing preliminary exercises, and one becomes literally young again . . . Great hopes mingled with dreams of the future.

This, towards the end of a life so tortured and harassed by the perpetual threatening of mental obscurisation in the blind alley of madness, and *this*, written many years ago, of one of his *dramatis personæ* (but one has not to become an adept in reading between lines, to discover that most of Strindberg's *dramatis personæ* are "voices of the wandering wind" of his own consciousness). That was the secret of his life, that he could not admire anything, could not hold to anything, could not live for anything; that he was too wide awake to suffer from illusions. Life was a form of suffering which could only be alleviated by removing as many obstacles as possible from the path of one's will.¹ And again, we note a stage in the same human document wherein it seems that the Elemental Kingdom is before the human in evolution, and that even in the many inventions that man has sought out "there is nothing new under the sun," that even they are but parodies of the ways of beasts and birds.

Birds use the wind for their progress . . . Beavers the pressure of the stream in constructing their dams. Are not the wings of the falcon and the fly more perfect means of locomotion than railways and steamers?

But, in the same book, we see a faint rainbow prophecy of "light in darkness". His philosophical friend comforted him, through a saying of La Bruyère.

Don't be angry because men are stupid and bad, or you will be angry because a stone falls; both are subject to the same laws; one must be stupid, and the other fall. "That is all very

¹ From *The Growth of a Soul*.

well," said John, "but think of having to be a bird and live in a ditch! Air! Light! I cannot breathe or see. . . I suffocate." *He began to habituate himself forcibly to doubt in order to be patient and not explode.*

The beginning of patience was the transition chord in the Strindbergian symphony, though in the beginning he himself knew it not.

With poet, scientist, dramatist, philosopher, man of action, striving together under one roof, it is no matter for surprise that philosophy, ethics and æsthetics raged furiously together. The Titan in him had stolen fire; what if the fire should burn out, the red and blue flames gradually pale, and the end of a God's rebellion be written in dust—*dust and ashes*? If that were all? But no! Dust and Ashes, the epitaph of identification with earth-consciousness, is not foredoomed to be written above any Titan's tomb. "Then shall the dust return to dust, and the Spirit to God who gave it." On wings of shining fire the phoenix mounts to the sun. The God emerged from the gnomonic bondage of earth, the divine butterfly from the worm. We can see the process at work, the redemption of matter by Spirit, by the alembic of the thinker, in the following significant fragment, wherein scientist, poet and philosopher begin to work together. One evening he found the chrysalis of a cockchafer in his study. He put it under his lamp, and "it began to click and make small movements". Under the influence of warmth, "the half-fluid mass . . . possessed the capacity of movement". This train of thought was followed up by opening a butterfly-chrysalis.

On a clear yellow background of fluid matter there was sketched as it were the outline of the future butterfly, in half-shadow, without as yet any bodily organisation. That is called "necrobiosis" or the dying off of living tissue. And the deliquescence of the chrysalis in slime is termed histolysis.

This is "not far from the kingdom" of reincarnation, and Strindberg's next remark shows that he felt the trend of investigation pointed in this direction. "Sometimes I see on a gravestone within a church-wall this symbol: caterpillar, chrysalis, and butterfly."

Theosophy had a mental fascination for Strindberg. He alludes to it in many of his works, but shows that its spiritual doctrines had not permeated his consciousness, for he persists in regarding it as a kind of "atheistic Occultism," an extraordinarily contradictory jumble! It seems as if the solitary taint of the materialistic cynicism of former years, lay in the direction of considering as "human nature" all that is evil in man. The following is an amusing example of his quasi-cynical, quasi-condescending attitude:

The Theosophists, who really at a terrible period of the "black illumination" sought to penetrate behind phenomena and dug up useful fragments of Ancient Wisdom, were however hostile to Christianity. They went so far as to send one of their prophets to India to warn the natives against the missionaries. But in course of time they began to investigate Christianity again; they were now provided with a proper means for understanding the mysteries of Christ's incarnation and atoning death, of sacraments and miracles. . . Their latest prophetess has written a book to explain and defend Christianity! All roads seem to lead to Christ. No one has done such good service to Christianity as the materialistic Occultists and the atheistic Theosophists.¹

We trust no Theosophist will find himself "so hardened and forsook" as not to be able to enjoy this summing-up of Theosophy, as seen through Strindberg's powerful if distorted lens. This is not all however; we obtain kinder notice later.

Theosophists say that we can create thought-forms which assume life and reality. . . It is as though one let loose demons. . . It is dangerous merely to think evil of men; one may do them harm thereby. But what a supernatural effort

¹ From *The Blue Book* headed 'The Black Illuminate'.

is necessary always to see good when so little is to be found ! And when we try our best we find that we have played the hypocrite. It is almost hopeless to hold the balance level when it is matter of judging men justly, for human nature is evil and cannot be altered.

Astrological students will have discovered that Saturn was Strindberg's planetary Spirit. Yet this is not the last testament of the philosopher, in whom fortitude won a sombre yet sufficient victory over suffering. "At eventide it shall be light," and it was so with this great brave genius. As the shadows of mortal life grew longer the fires of immortality glowed with golden intensity, and the "still small voice" spoke from the white heart of Genius triumphant—such sentences as "Music. . . the recollection of a condition which every man in his best moments longs for. And that very longing shows a vague consciousness of having lost something which one has formerly possessed," shows that the poet in him was *muse-led* (mystic) and would not be denied. The record of an imprisoned "son of the fire," feeling the torment of the descent into matter has left impression, fiery if fugitive, in :

All the elements which conjointly constitute the universe are nothing else than fallen divinities, which, through the stone, plant, animal, human, and angelic kingdoms, climb up to heaven, only to fall down again.

What a life-time of Promethean pain is here epitomised !

The following analogy is a remarkable instance of perspicuity and acquiescence mingled, and recalls Job's "though he slay me yet will I trust in him". Strindberg is writing of Huysman's *En Route*, the reading of which marked one of the epochs in his spiritual journey home :

Why did not this confession of an Occultist fall into my hands before? Because it was necessary that two analogous destinies should be developed on parallel lines, so that one might be strengthened by the other. It is the history of an over-curious man, who challenges the Sphinx and is devoured by her, that his soul may be delivered at the foot of the Cross.

The Sphinx and the Cross. The Mystery of the knowledge of good and evil, guarding the entrance to the Path. Here let us leave Strindberg, one of the greatest Spirits of modern times.

"How art thou fallen, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning!"

True. But as deeply as thou hast fallen into generation, so viewless shall be thy flight, when the aether of air and fire shall receive thee out of men's vision.

Hear the genius and mortal instrument, in wondrous reconciliation united for a brief instant of experience in time, ere the moment eternal for which creation is but the prelude:

Pray, *but* work; suffer, *but* hope; keeping both the earth and the stars in view. Do not try and settle permanently, for it is a place of pilgrimage; not a home, but a halting place. Seek truth, for it is to be found, but only in one place, with Him who Himself is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Lily Nightingale

THEOSOPHY AND MODERN EDUCATION

By HELEN F. R. VEALE

THEOSOPHISTS have recently had their attention urgently called to educational ideals, as set forth in *Education as Service*, and other publications of the Theosophical press. In the zeal with which we respond to this key-note, I feel there is some danger lest we fail to make ourselves familiar with actual conditions around us, and the extent to which our ideals have already been formulated and practised. Without any depreciation, we may remember that the writers on this subject have generally had in mind eastern rather than western conditions, and though the ideal to be aimed at be alike for West and East, the obstacles in the way of attainment may vary considerably and present different points of attack. To work effectively, we must make ourselves thoroughly familiar with the weak points of the present position, alienate no sympathy by using our heavy artillery against an already conceded fort, but rather concentrate on that next to be won.

Those who have had no recent personal knowledge of our State schools in England can hardly realise the extent to which they have changed within the last twenty years; and the change is a very radical one, based on the recognition of the principle that the attitude of the teacher to the child must be that of love,

sympathy and understanding. That this principle is now fully recognised, anyone must admit who will take the trouble to visit one of our Training Colleges, or read a modern psychological handbook for teachers. Then, if an earnest seeker for truth, he will make the round of the elementary and secondary schools in his neighbourhood, to satisfy himself how far the teachers respond to their training.

Having had some experience, directly and through a Training College, of different types of London schools, I feel able to predict with some confidence the results of his inquiry. The average elementary child does not regard the average teacher with fear or dislike, or associate school with unhappiness and pain. This mild statement of merely negative virtue is perhaps all that can be claimed for the average; but in proportion to the poverty of the neighbourhood does the school stand out conspicuously as a place of sunshine and happiness, and students of the Training College I knew used to love best to be sent for their practice to either of two available "slum" schools, where joy prevailed astonishingly over hard conditions. Indeed, it is fully recognised among teachers that the most damaging criticism an inspector can make is that the "atmosphere" of a certain class is not happy. So far has this been carried that an accompanying danger is not always avoided—the danger of a mawkish sentimentality and indeed want of sincerity; for obviously the Training College can only work on material to hand, and in its two or three years' course cannot instil into all who pass through it the genuine teacher's breadth of love and sympathy. But this is only a transitional defect and will pass as the nobility of the teacher's work

becomes more recognised, and its call is heard by nobler minds.

It may be objected that corporal punishment is still allowed in elementary schools. This is true, and must be disapproved in principle by Theosophists, yet in practice it is becoming increasingly rare, and personally I feel it hard to condemn those who believe its total abolition would at present be harmful. We have to bear in mind the material with which these teachers have to work, and the necessity that often arises of protecting weaker children in a large class from some few of brutal, and even criminal, propensities, who are not easily influenced by gentle means, and to whose regeneration a teacher has no time exclusively to devote himself. It is significant how far more easily the newer methods of education make way in infant schools than in the senior departments. In all cases that I have known, the infant school has been a place of happy and contented work, on the right lines, with the admirable Dale system of teaching to read, and any amount of manual work, free self-expression, story-telling and dramatising, and real love between teachers and children. But after seven the poor child quickly hardens, and we find correspondingly as we travel up the school, the teacher's voice becoming more strident and rasping, and conditions altogether much further from being satisfactory.

Partly, no doubt, this may be attributed to the fact that these older children suffer more from injurious home conditions. An average hard-working mother will find time for tenderness to the baby and ex-baby, but too soon comes the time when soft indulgence gives place to slaps and threats, with all their hardening results. This too is gradually improving, and parental

tenderness is certainly on the increase ; but meanwhile is it not conceivably better that schools, while maintaining a good lead, should not leap forward so fast as to be out of sight of the child's home educators ? A good response depends on mutual understanding of the point of view, and a teacher who is too refined and gentle for a class may be despised as a weakling, whereas a coarse good-humoured despot, who wields arbitrary powers impartially, wins real liking as well as respect. These friendly relations, I maintain, are the rule, and not the exception, in our schools, and no less in the elementary schools, where corporal punishment is still allowed, than in the secondary, where the principle that control must be by love rather than by fear is still more recognised.

Having tried to defend our present educational system from the most serious charge that can be brought against it, that its methods are still those of brutality, I must yet concede that it is very vulnerable to attack on another side. An ordinary elementary education does not fit a child of the people to meet life's demands upon him, to take up his heritage of work and responsibility and acquit himself creditably.

It is not difficult to see that the reason why our schools are out of touch with the life of the nation is largely the uniformity of our educational system, imposing a common standard over areas of very different capacities and needs. It has all been "of a piece" with other blunders made by a young democracy and must be rectified with them now that some discretion is being reached. When the great extension of the suffrage in 1867 gave force to the demands for popular education, pioneers in the good work were already,

without ostentation, experimenting along right lines in certain model schools, where the needs of the village were specially served, and technical training predominated over intellectual. But this did not satisfy the more democratic, whose demand now was that the poor man's child should have whatever had been considered beneficial to the richer man's child.

So, however admirable in some ways the work done by the School Boards, and later by Education Committees, the results from the first have failed to give satisfaction, because the expenditure has been on wrong lines. The chief middle class models were of the type of Grammar Schools, dating from the Revival of Classical Learning in the Sixteenth Century, and still fast bound in the meshes of a pernicious tradition. The only modifications introduced into the classical system had been such as were urged by the commercial needs of the nation, and the average product of such a school was, at best, fitted to be a clerk. The movement for the higher education of girls considerably raised the standard of literary culture, even in boys' schools, but still the old models were followed, and mediæval scholars, or their modern followers among erudite Professors, were still prescribing for the children of a living present. In the Middle Ages it was only the exceptional man who preferred the pursuit of letters to the bolder attractions of life ; yet something approaching his standard of literary taste and style must now be required of each wretched youngster who would pass creditably a school-leaving examination at sixteen!

How easily could the promoters of National Education in 1870 have avoided these mistakes, if they had started the consideration of the problem before them at

the other end, namely, at the actual present needs of the children of England, locally and temporarily, instead of at an abstract, conventional thought-form of the thing called Education, hitherto monopolised by the well-to-do, now to be administered whole to the masses !

It should be conceded that here, too, advanced opinion is urging reform along the right lines, in the establishment of trade schools, technical institutes, and vocational classes ; and Theosophical workers have their way clearly marked out for them. Local Education Committees must be strengthened and encouraged to work on individual lines, responsible to the Central Board only for the children's general well-being, mental, moral and physical, instead of for their attainment to a uniform standard of knowledge.

So we are led to the broader political question, and may look forward to a day when the details of administration shall have devolved upon District Councils, autonomous within their own spheres of action, instead of clogging the works of a single, central administrative machine, which labours under the additional disadvantage of being alternately worked by rival parties, with mutually destructive ends in view.

But it is only an uneducated England that would tolerate our present misrule by party-government. Once the Nation has learnt Self-government within restricted areas, by dealing with local problems of administration, it will demand, and know how to secure better service in its Parliament and Council, and nothing is at present so urgently needed as enlightened and independent work in County and District Councils, and Education Committees.

Helen F. R. Veale

THE AFTERMATH OF JOY

By M. ROCKE

IN this time of universal war, when men's hearts fail for fear, and the anguished sob shakes the bravest; when the groan of the tortured, the agony of the wounded, the terror of the threatened, the suspense of friends, the desolation of survivors, are felt on all sides, to think of Joy would seem as cruel mockery.

But JOY cometh : a JOY such as rarely is with men. After the storm, the sun ; after the plough, the harvest ; after the pain, the peace ; in due proportion each to each, except that there is always more joy than sorrow in this world of ours.

Are we ready ? Events are breathlessly rapid, the world is being set in order, nations are being proven, heroes being formed, character being tested, precipitated, moulded, at lightning speed : the noise of the Preparation is terrible. Are we ready ?

If the warring world only knew ! Knew that which is to follow, knew the JOY that waits, it would smile through its tears of blood, and even welcome that which hastens the Day when man's Saviour shall again be in its midst.

The ploughing ere the sowing and the harvest. The plough cuts deeply into the stale soil, and turns it anew with face upward to its lovers, the clouds and sun.

Flowers are crushed in the furrows, but to spring again the better on the new-made earth.

How could He come to man who was everywhere rigid, stubborn, set in his own little ways and thoughts and beliefs? Man, limited, fenced in, bound about. The Truth is a living fire and sets free, but the flame cannot burn under lid and cover, shut away from God's free air into cramped compartments labelled orthodoxy.

Man must be shaken out of his grooves, his habits of thought, his superstitions, his blasphemous fears, his arthritic conventions, before he can answer to the Living Truth. It is so strong, so tender, so sane, that man could not credit it, and raised instead his own crude and cruel conceptions, setting up bogies where-with to frighten the dear timid suppliants, till they dare not think for themselves and are slaves to conscience.

A terrible price to pay! Yes, but as naught to the result. The storm rages and bears down before its blast the withered leaf, the worm-eaten twig, the hollow trunk, the shallow-rooted sapling; as well as the tree in its prime. But after the storm, the still small voice and the GARDENER is here. He can work now, in the loosened soil and the softened earth.

God is Love, and He brings about the war? Yes: but all mankind is in His consciousness; a very part of Him, Himself.

As a man diving is shut out from light and air, and pressed on all sides by a weight of water which obscures his vision, his speech, his hearing, and occupies all his faculties in the bare struggle back to air, so does the God-substance dive deeply down into matter, and after groping there, blindly, unwittingly,

begin its return struggle upwards to its natural sphere, which ends in Godhead. And the diver, as he turns upwards, is called man.

This war, as well as this single little life—out of many that he is now living—is less than a drop in that ocean of experience through which man passes; and even the mighty Joy of the Lord's coming, which shall surely follow in the peace purchased by the war, has been known to him before on his long journey Home.

Nor need he think sadly of those whose physical bodies have been struck away, leaving them in their subtler ones just at this time of times when imprisonment on earth will be most welcome; for man's Great Lover comes to him in all worlds equally, and none who will shall miss this opportunity of the ages so soon now to be vouchsafed.

May we decide to be ready.

I, thyself, worship Thee, Thyself:

I, myself, worship Thee, Myself:

I, the one, worship Thee, the ONE.

AUM

M. Roche



ĀRYAN MYTHOLOGY

(WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ITS NORTHERN FORM)

By ISABELLE M. PAGAN

(Concluded from p. 43.)

AND now returning to the genealogical table of deities given above, let us examine the Scandinavian representatives a little more carefully. Ymir begat Buri, and Buri begat Bör, and Bör begat the wondrous Three known as Odin, Vilje and Vê—otherwise the All-Father, Lodur and Hönir—who together made the world and all that therein is. The first of all these, Ymir, the great-great-grandfather of the lesser Gods, is the *Chaos*¹ of the Grecian scriptures and of our own, and

¹ This stage is perhaps the Yoga-Māyā of the Hindū description.

needs no comment. In the stately stanzas of Dzryan, or in the less detailed account given in the first chapter of Genesis, the words referring to his kingdom arrest the imagination, giving us the subtle thrill of expectancy. In the time "when darkness alone filled the boundless all," and "the earth was without form and void," everything was latent and potential. The body of what was to be the universe was slowly gathering itself together in space. Therefore it is that the Scandinavian Gods are described as carrying the body of Ymir—this Giant whom they themselves had slain—into Ginnungagap, the great abyss. Of his flesh they formed the earth, and of his bones the mountains. The blood that flowed from his wounds formed the ocean, and of his huge skull the vault of heaven was built; and then the Three adorned it with the sparks and glowing cinders that showered from Muspellheim—the glorious Kingdom of the Fire—so establishing the starry hosts in their courses. In yet earlier times, before these activities were possible, the All-Father was, we are told *still among the frost giants*; an interesting assertion, showing how firmly the old poets had grasped the fact that all the Divine Powers are essentially One.¹

Between Chaos, or Ymir, and the activities of the personified Trinity, we find two steps—the emergence of Buri, and the birth of Bör. Buri is easily identified with the Latin Cœlus, the Greek Ouranos, *God of infinite space* of our Christian definition. The sacred name of the Hindû God Varuṇa, suggests by its lovely vowel music the same type of wondering worship as that accorded to Ouranos, who was regarded with too much reverence by the Greek poets for much to be said about

¹ Hindû mythological names often suggest these truths. Thus Brahman, representing an earlier stage of manifestation, includes Brahṃā.

him. He is too great for the mind of man to conceive, and so far as we know, no artist in either Greece or Rome, ever attempted to portray him. In the same way in the North, Buri does little, in the old myth, beyond giving birth to Bör, of whom it is easier to begin to form some conception. He is the Chronos of Greece, the Saturn of Rome, the Ancient of Days of the Hebrew, the Old Father Time of our modern speech, converted by our little ones into the beloved Father Christmas, who brings them with rhythmic regularity the festival of festivals.¹ Rhythm, or vibration, is the essential element in Time, and if we meditate deeply on this aspect we are face to face with the cyclic laws that govern all manifestation. The wondrous conception summed up for our Hindū brothers in the name of Īshvara has something of the same character.

In classical mythology the three great sons of Chronos divide his kingdom among them; and, despite occasional discord, they are represented as together forwarding the work of creation. Their northern counterparts are said, in the old *Edda*, to have made man from the two trees, Ask and Embla, which they found upon the shore—a very suggestive phrase. *On the shore*—that is to say, between sea and land, where two different elements meet. Here are united two distinct lines of evolution—the astral and the physical—expressed by the roots of these symbolic trees, thus producing in mankind the curious dual nature, and giving him the task of uniting the two. The physical and astral bodies had already evolved in the animal kingdom, the mental was still undeveloped, and with its awakening came changes in the astral and physical as well. So the three Gods are represented as all working together on

¹ Christmas-tide was the Saturnalia of Rome.

the transformation. Odin, the All-Father, gives the *breath*, Hönir or Vê the *sense*, Lodur or Vilje the *blood and fair colouring*. The blood is the life, says the New Testament; and it is life that is poured into us through the action of the Holy Spirit, life which manifests in the Will—Vilje—to live. A strong and somewhat stern deity this God of the Will, the administrator of the kârmic law and therefore of Justice on the physical plane. This is the Hades or Pluto of classical myth, the recording angel of the Christian, Muhammadan and Jew.

From Hönir comes the sense, says the *Edda*. We should rather have expected the senses; but after all, they are mere instruments, and this saying goes beneath the surface. Through the experience gathered by means of the senses we acquire both sense and sensibility. Alternations of pleasure and pain,¹ and the ceaseless attempt to attain the former and avoid the latter drive us forward, and the lessons that are lasting come chiefly through pain. It is therefore not surprising that Hönir's second title is Vê or, in English, Woe.

In ancient Greece the All-Father is represented as the youngest-born of the three brethren, and rightly so, for the mental body is organised later than the physical and astral; but so important is his Upper-world, or Kingdom of Air, at this our present stage of evolution as members of the fifth Root Race, that all pure-blooded Āryans, and especially those of the fifth sub-race, tend to exalt this aspect of deity. Accordingly we find the Scandinavians placing the throne of Odin high above the heights, where he sits with his dark blue mantle spangled with stars draped all around him—the Father

¹ It is the Second Person who is universally represented as incarnating on earth to help humanity. In Christian teaching he becomes the man of sorrows acquainted with grief. The passion is the suffering or *woe* of the Christ.

in Heaven reigning *above the bright blue sky*, as described in the familiar Christian hymn. It is noteworthy that this exaltation of the Father above the other persons in the Trinity has been a frequent form of heresy, and one bitterly persecuted in the Christian Church; and yet the moment the inspired artist begins to differentiate the aspects either pictorially or in verse, it is a heresy in which he is all but certain to be entangled. Our Theosophical teachers are constantly reminding us that the planes interpenetrate, and are *not* placed one above another like flats in a modern street. But once start weaving them into a fairy tale, and the magic seed is planted, which growing ever upward, leads us higher and higher to the wondrous land above the clouds, where the strains of the magic harp are heard.

In Thorpe's *Northern Mythology* (now out of print)

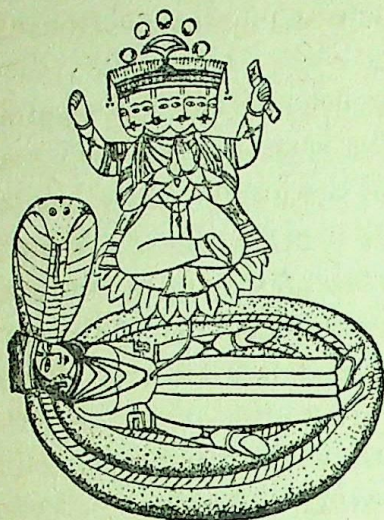


THE SCANDINAVIAN TRINITY.

King Gylfi before the Three Thrones; on which are seated *the High*, on the lowest; *the Equally High* on the next, and *the Third*, highest of all. The original is in an old MS. of Snorri's *Edda*.

the frontispiece shows a quaint old Scandinavian drawing of *The Three Thrones*, and although those who sit thereon are described in words as *the High*, *the Equally High*, and *the Third*, they are all drawn on different levels! Similarly, in Hindū pictures of the Trinity, Brahmā is seen enthroned upon the sacred lotus which blossoms in the Kingdom of the Air, his four heads suggesting the four spiritual planes above the mental; Viṣṇu lies in the waters, which rest upon the solid earth beneath, around which is coiled Shiva, the

third person, in the form of a serpent. A wonderfully



THE HINDŪ TRINITY

Brahmā on the sacred Lotus in the Kingdom of Air, Viṣṇu from whom it springs lying in the waters, Shiva coiled as a serpent around both.

East or West, we may appreciate something of the beauty of the teaching behind the ancient allegory.

In a seafaring race such as the Scandinavians, we might expect the world of waters and the deities appertaining thereto to be given a specially important place, and certainly sea-going adventures among the Northern Gods do abound; but it is noteworthy that when the personified Trinity is mentioned, the astral deity, Hönir or Vê, generally comes third instead of second; a sidelight on the characteristics of a race which represses emotion, and gives great prominence to mental and physical achievement. In one myth, Thor, who is of the Asa Gods, or mental deities, attempts to drink up the whole of the ocean in three Gargantuan gulps, and actually succeeds in temporarily diminishing it, so as to cause the neap tides! This myth possibly embodies a typical northern conviction that the cure for

compact piece of symbolism that!—and one to which we shall return later on. Taking it as a fresh point of departure, let us dig right down to the foundations of the elemental kingdoms and try to get our bewildering array of deities and semi-deities and super-deities into something like order, so that to whatever scheme of presentation we turn, North, South,

excessive emotion is hard practical work; for the heroic Thor is a very Hercules for exploits of the most arduous kind.

The most generalised expression for the ruler of the emotional plane is the deity known as the Aegir, the God of the great deep; and the water-folk who belong to him are all of the race of the Vanir or Vans.¹ Among them two of the male deities especially come to the fore, suggesting, by their respective characteristics, the two contrasting aspects of the Sea-God in the South, where Poseidon (or Neptune) is sometimes represented as furiously raging, and at other times as quietly asleep. So in the North, we find both the gentle Hönir and energetic Njord—the latter a delightfully refreshing personification, the father of the great waves, who makes things so lively for the Asa Gods when he pays them a friendly visit, that they invite him to stay on for a bit, sending back the sleepy Hönir to take his place in the kingdom of the Aegir! So Hönir goes to the great deep; but is nevertheless to be met with in other forms far inland as well. It is probably the rivers that give him his quaintest title, that of Long-shanks, and the dreary stretches of bog and quagmire in Denmark and Sweden provide him with a kingdom that is neither earth nor water, but a mixture of both, over which he reigns as the *Marsh King*. In this character he is sluggish and lazy and of ill repute; and his treacherous territory claims many victims, including the fair young Princess from the land of Egypt—the daughter of the River Nile—who flies over sea and land in the plumage of a swan, seeking the flower that is to bring health to her royal father on his bed of sickness. Alighting on the

¹ Vand is Norse for water.

edge of the Marsh, she throws aside the feathery dress that has borne her through the air—the realm of thought—and rests on the old tree-trunk that lies on the margin of the dark waters looking so safe a seat. There her own sisters cruelly forsake her, tearing her white plumage—her mental equipment—to tatters as they go, and the treacherous log rolls over, stretching out slimy arm-branches that draw her down into the oozy depths. Not till after many days does the stem that springs from this strange and sorrowful union press upwards to the surface, bearing the bud that is to expand into the lovely lily, in the heart of which lies the babe that shares the nature of both parents; who, when the lower nature is conquered, is destined to bring peace to the suffering monarch in his palace by the Nile. It is Hans C. Andersen who tells us the tale. He got it “from the storks,” so he says; from the storks—who are *the birds of Hövir*—and “who have been telling that story to their own little ones for countless generations”; but as we read it, the dream-like Orient rises before us, and we see again the wonderful symbolic drawing described above, the picture of Vishṇu, lying in the depths of the muddy waters, with Shiva coiled as a serpent around him, and the Lotus flower slowly rising upwards, to form the sacred seat of Brahmā himself. And so the dusky child of India and the blue-eyed Dane, meeting in the fairy-land of fancy, clasp hands across the barriers built by difference of language and environment, and understand that at heart they are one.

The Marsh King's daughter of actual Scandinavian mythology is Frigg or Fricka, who reigns over the fertile meadow-lands that lie around the marshes, and the great King to whom she proves a helpmeet is the

All-Father Odin himself. Like Hera, Juno, and Sarasvatī she is the Goddess of the social order and of the marriage contract. When souls are ready to incarnate they are said to drop as ripe fruit on to Fricka's territory, from the tree of life. Thence they are carried by Hönir's storks to those women "who are longing for the caressing touch of baby fingers"—a very poetic way of putting the fact that through the medium of desire, the watery element, acting on the physical plane, the phenomenon of physical birth takes place; and to this day mothers in Germany teach their children that it is storks who bring the baby sisters and brothers, although few or none realise that they are thus perpetuating an allegorical teaching belonging to the faith of their forefathers.

Another identification may perhaps make my readers smile, but most of them will admit that there is a good deal to be said in favour of it. In Scandinavian and Teutonic literature we find a good many references to the Swan Mothers, and we have already seen that plumage of any kind is to be interpreted in terms of the upper world of air, the mental plane. In England, France, Belgium and other countries we have a nursery favourite in the person of dear old Mother Goose, whose quaint title has puzzled the etymologists and even set them solemnly to work to explain it away by converting *Mère d'Oie* into *Mère de Loi*. Naturally enough too; for she has much wisdom, and no connection whatever with the barn-yard waddler! possibly the arrow-shaped flight of the wild geese, with its suggestion of the sacred triangle, had stirred some Sage of ancient days to a reverent interest in the power that guides these evolutions of flight in far-away cloudland. Anyhow it is there

that this old Mother lives, and the soft grey and white clouds are her feather beds. When in frosty weather, she warms herself by an extra special bout of "tidying up," she gives the said feathers such a vigorous shaking, that down they come in the form of snow-flakes! A capable housewife this!—with a dash of the fairy God-mother about her too; for she wears a scarlet cloak and a conical black hat, and comes sailing out of the sky, mounted on the snow-white goose—her 'Vāhan'!¹—which gives her the right to her title. She comes to teach the human mothers the nursery jingles they sing to their babies, and to tell all the best of the fairy-tales—including Cinderella, the Blue-bird, and countless other lovely allegories—to the older children. Here we probably have some ancient deity of the mental plane, possibly Fricka in her gentlest aspect, the patroness of early education, who develops later into the guardian of the kindergarten and the school, and finally into the Alma Mater of the University—by which time she has become something of a stickler for custom and tradition, and a devout believer in established law, severe at times, no doubt, but the great wise Mother² of the race through it all, understanding very thoroughly what is best for the majority.

In the case of Fricka we have an example of a deity who expresses the overlapping or interaction of the kingdoms. She is the child of the Marsh—of

¹ In India every deity has his or her *Vāhan*, the bird or animal mounted by preference. Shiva as an Earthy deity has a snow-white bull; others, more mental, have birds.

² Protestant Christianity has lost sight of the Mother element in theology, and concentrates all its devotion on the aspects described as the Father and the Son; but the Church of Rome has preserved her worship in the honours paid to the Madonna, who is referred to as *the Great Earth-Mother, the Star of the Sea, and the Queen of Heaven*—very potent, and to be adored on all three planes.

earth and water and is incomplete till wedded to the King of Heaven, the Overlord of the upper air. The earth and water mixture is a perilous one left to itself, and the Nixie and the Water-kelpie and the Sirens and the Lorelei—all associated with shipwreck or loss of life—are symbols of the dangers attending impure emotion of any kind. Frey and Freya on the other hand are children of the Sea-God in a very different aspect, when he is hailed as Njord, and strikes us as being as much a son of the winds as of the waters. The flying clouds over which the Valkyrie ride, the rain that fertilises the seed, the great billows leaping towards the stars, yield us a wealth of poetic imagery of which the old skalds took full advantage. The waves—great surges of emotion—representing big joys and big sorrows, are all alike the children of Njord. In Greece it is from the crown and crest of them, the snowy foam that is airiest of all—that the Goddess of Love is born, and her birth is attributed to the generative power of Ouranos, the Lord of the firmament and of infinite space. She is the Lakṣhmī of India, the Venus of Rome, the Freya of the North, where, belonging as much to the Asa Gods as to the Vanir, she takes her place in Asgard, along with her brother Frey, whose refreshing showers seem to suggest the tears connected with mirth or with the gentler emotions—tears which relieve the heart and are shed without bitterness. When we raise our thoughts to this level, and higher yet to the rainbow bridge of *Bi-frost*, which carries us into the sacred halls of Valhalla itself, it is time to realise that we have imperceptibly crossed a boundary, and are already in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Once again, the symbolism of this upper world, with its moments on the mount and its soaring aspirations, is very familiar to us; not only through the works of the great poets, but also in our own daily speech; for we are all prone to *building castles in the air*; and even if in many cases the architecture leaves a good deal to be desired, the exercise is in itself favourable to the growth of faculty. Most of us keep to the lower or *rūpa* levels, *the region of the clouds*, those vapoury symbols of such thoughts as are largely affected by the emotions of the moment; but there is also the realm of abstract thought *above the clouds*, where a clear view of the lower planes can always be obtained, and where fundamental laws can be examined and apprehended. Therefore the prophet and the lawgiver must ascend the mountain¹ to receive the teaching, before again descending to the level on which it can be given forth in concrete and thoroughly practical form. The God of Israel rests as a cloud upon the Mercy-seat, and in time of tribulation goes before his people as a pillar of cloud—a great mental ideal—by day, and a pillar of fire by night; and the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire are one, though revealed in different stages or states of consciousness. Their close connection is symbolically represented both in Greece and Scandinavia, for Zeus holds in his right hand the thunderbolt, forged by Hephaistos (or Vulcan), the smith among the Gods, whose very breath makes the fiery furnace glow; and Odin carries a spear, the gift of Loki, sometimes described

¹ The Christ taught his disciples on the Mount, and the common people by the seashore. His message, as spread abroad by his followers, has hitherto made its chief appeal to the hearts of men, missionary exhortation being largely emotional rather than intellectual. When He comes again, we are told, it will be in the clouds; *i.e.*, bringing with him a teaching that will appeal more definitely to the reason. Our scientists may be the priests of the new era!

as his half-brother, the strange many-sided deity of the leaping flame.

High above all the seats of the lesser Gods is the throne of the All-Father, and from that eminence he looks benevolently down upon the children of men. The all-seeing eye of Odin is the Sun, and his mantle is the blue vault of heaven. We might describe him as the *thought* aspect of the Solar Logos, and all forms of mental energy come under his sway. In Greece he is described with special reverence, and Homer speaks very beautifully of *prayers* being among his children. That is the aspect of deity which the Christian Scientists and Mental Scientists of to-day are putting so earnestly before the public that they sometimes seem to limit the conception of deity to the Divine Mind alone, ignoring all other aspects in a way that would have horrified the founders of these older faiths. Still, if they are succeeding in driving home the lesson of the Fatherhood of God, and its essential corollary the Brotherhood of man, to a race still greatly in want of such teaching, they are doing a tremendous piece of work, and one that forms a very important part of our Āryan revelation.

To the Early Fathers of the Church, who accepted the Jewish Scriptures as the basis of Christian teaching, the chief objection to the Āryan religions which they sought to displace was the immorality of the Gods whom the people were taught to worship, and who might therefore be regarded as examples to be followed; and there is certainly something to be said for that point of view. The unimaginative mind, incapable of thinking in metaphor, may find a presentment of the Powers given in terms of family relationships, as something that hinders rather than helps the understanding.

Once embark upon metaphor however, and the ordinary standards of morality, affecting the welfare of evolving humanity, have to be set aside. The Powers are all akin—and very nearly akin. They have their positive and negative—their male and female—aspects; and in the great work of creative evolution the various elements intermingle, producing new elements, which react upon the progenitors and again receive fresh impulses from them. The morality of the chemical laboratory would play sad havoc with our social system as far as family life is concerned. Each chemical combines with the most attractive mate available at any given stage in the course of an experiment, and such combination may be entirely broken up by the introduction of a new element at a later stage, after which other influences may combine to make the earlier attraction dominate once more. And so it is with the warring and conflicting elements brought into relation with each other in the building of a universe. At every stage the Great Architect who plans the whole is called upon for fresh direction and a fresh outpouring of energy; and the particular form of activity stirred to productiveness by any such stimulus is presented to us in the symbolic drama of Āryan mythology as one whom the Father has loved or wed. Greece gives Zeus seven mates, the seven mothers of his many children, and the most important of them all, Hera, is daughter as well as spouse to her husband. Like Fricka in the North, she is jealous of her rivals, and would fain confine her husband's efforts to her own department of established and customary procedure. In most Āryan races she is patroness of education and of the right discipline of the young, a very wise deity, who knows

right well what is good for the majority ; and her children in Scandinavia are many and wonderful, including Baldur the beautiful—the Northern Bacchus—and the heroic Thor. Students of Comparative Mythology have often been hampered in the work of identification by the diverse descriptions of the outer personalities of the Gods, which naturally vary with race and climate and the stage of civilisation attained. In the strenuous North every God is a warrior, even the All-Father himself, and the heroes whom he rewards are warriors too. Indeed the very daughters of Odin, the nine Valkyrie, with whom Wagner has made us familiar, are warrior-maidens with the courage and something of the semblance of men. As they gallop past on their flying steeds, bearing heavenwards the gloriously slain, they are so far removed from their Grecian sisters that we scarcely recognise them, until we remember that the Nine Muses, the daughters of Zeus, whose mother is Mnemosyne or Memory, also gallop over the clouds on the winged steed known as Pegasus, and carry men heavenward by conferring upon them the wider vision and fuller consciousness associated with the gift of genius in science or in art. Further, in Greece we find the best beloved of all the daughters of Zeus in Pallas Athene (Minerva) who springs from her father's forehead, fully armed, and is defined by Plato as *Moral Intelligence*. She reveals the will of the God to men, and may easily be identified with the Scandinavian Brynhilda, the first-born daughter of Odin, who has imparted her martial characteristics to all her sisters, and whose wondrous steed, Grane, plays a part in many an ancient Saga.

In the South, Apollo leads the Muses. In the North when we look for him among the patrons of art and literature, we find Bragi, the Bright or Shining One, the poet God of Valhalla, doing part of his work, while Baldur does the rest. The Sun-God is doomed to long banishment in the frozen North, and men have to strengthen their hearts and develop their powers of endurance, by concentrating their minds on other, and often less harmonious, aspects. It is the wondrous water-power of Norway, coming down from the eternal snows, and generating heat and electricity, that seems likely to give that land a prominent place among the nations in years to come; and there are signs that the descendants of the Vikings are ceasing to weep¹ for Baldur, as they light up the darkness of their long winter, and busy themselves in learning better than ever before to wield the hammer of Thor. As a matter of fact the latter God has always been the favourite with this fifth sub-race, Scandinavian and Teutonic, which appreciates practical hard work and successful wrestling with the powers of nature more than either art or eloquence. The name of Bragi, the skald of Valhalla, has degenerated among us into the curt little monosyllable 'brag'—a word of scant repute—and even to the present day we revel in the exploits of Thor, actually preserved to us in the good old nursery stories of Jack the Giant Killer, and Jack and the Beanstalk. Indeed, amazing as it may sound, the original of the valiant Hop-o'-my-Thumb is probably Thor too; for was it not that hero who, in the course of one of his most perilous expeditions, crept wearily into what he

¹ The depressing influence of the long winter has always been a problem in the North—driving many to alcoholism.

fancied was the hall of a huge castle, and only discovered next morning that it was merely the thumb of an enormous glove dropped by the particular giant he had set forth to fight!—which things are, as usual, an allegory. How many a great engineering feat has been underestimated at the time when first undertaken?—and how often has the enterprising spirit had to sleep over it, before the dream became actual fact! The descendants of those who exalted the name of Thor—or Donner, as the Teutons call him—are carrying railways across great ravines and up high mountains and over trackless deserts all the world over—a warfare more glorious, and in some cases more costly in human life, than many minor campaigns due to the squabbles of the nations for place and power.

Only a Mystic can realise all that is implied in the imagery of ancient mythology, and only an Occultist can synthesise, while clearly differentiating, the various activities personified by the poets and philosophers; but, as we have tried to show, even the man in the street can gather something inspiring and helpful from such symbolism, if he will only put himself as much as possible in the place of these gifted seers of old and endeavour to share their point of view. To them the Earth was not merely “a lump of dead matter,” as we have heard a modern materialist describe her, but a living creature, pulsating with divine life, *the oldest of the Gods*—according to Plato—and our tender and loving nurse. As every man is the centre of consciousness in his own universe, his Mother Earth is naturally the starting point of all observations for him; and long after he has realised that she is only one small planet in a solar system which is a mere atom in a stupendous

whole, he will still continue to think and reason in terms of earth experience ; which gives us yet another light on Fricka and her still greater Mother,¹ Erda or Jord.

Besides all these great northern deities and their children, we have vast numbers of their helpers or subjects, corresponding to the lesser angels, or, if engaged on destructive work, to the *demons* of Fire, Air, Earth, and Water respectively. And again the interaction is seen when we find these elementals engaged in strife or active in co-operation. Thus the alfer or elves and the dwarfs or gnomes in the Sagas of the North are all quite appropriately referred to as *the helpers of Odin* ; for although many of them are concerned mainly in physical plane activities, they are carrying out the scheme of the divine creative mind. Wonderful workers too, these craftsmen of primeval days !—the makers of the crystals and precious metals, the cunning smiths who, with their unceasing industry, produce the jewelled ornaments that deck the Gods, or show their skill as nature-spirits in clothing Mother Earth herself in the lovely hues of the varying seasons ! Theosophical writers describe them as wearing etheric bodies, easily perceived by races that possess etheric sight ; and there is much quaint detail about them in the folk-lore of all nations. In Scotland and Ireland they are *the wee folk* or *the good people*, and the home-loving English Brownie is one of their kindred. In the frozen North their task is a hard one, and their tiny hammers resound in our ears again and again throughout Wagner's great drama of

¹ This deity is known as Rhea in Greece and Vesta in Rome. In the *Book of Revelation* she is *the woman clothed with the sun, having the moon—her satellite—under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars*—the rulers of the signs of the Zodiac ; i.e., the twelve Archangels of the Hebrew religion.

The Ring; for these are the Niflung or Nibelung, the dwarf inhabitants of the kingdom of Niflheim. The name of which carries us back to an earlier paragraph and gives us an important identification at once.

The remote ancestor of all these busy creatures is Ivalde, whose union with a giantess produces three sons, Valand, Egil, and Slagfinn; and at this early stage, when the mineral kingdom is evolving, it is Valand, the smith of his generation, that takes the lead, and his realm that is the important one. Professor Rydberg identifies him with Tjasse, who kept Iduna of the golden apples a prisoner, much as Pluto kept Proserpine; so that again we find a link that helps us to classify the characters in our drama; Pluto or Hades is the great Lord of Karma on the plane of action, the deity manifesting in unerring physical law.

There are aspects of this stern ruler of the underworld which are curiously suggestive, reminding us that, although we may recognise him through the laws affecting matter, it is the life behind the matter that we are asked to reverence. Modern writers recognise it as *the Life-Force*, that enthrals the attention of so many of our biologists and sociologists. In India we have seen this aspect represented as the Serpent coiled around the mud—that fertile mixture of earth and water—out of which the Lotus rises upwards. In Scandinavian legend we find the Mid-Gard serpent encircling the whole world, and holding his tail in his mouth. Generation and regeneration are ideas often found associated with the serpent symbol, and the dissolution of all things is connected with the day when he will break the circle, releasing his tail; and then the

Twilight of the Gods is to come, the world and all that therein is, passing into the darkness of the unknown. In the Hebrew Scriptures it is the serpent that tempts Adam and Eve; in other words it is the Life-Force that draws them downward into physical incarnation, after their creation on the higher planes; and their assumption of coats of skin is interpreted by Madame Blavatsky as the taking on of physical bodies. This period corresponds to the stage when the reign of Valand is over, and Lodur has come to the front, with his gift of *blood and fair colouring*, Lodur who is also Vilje, the God of the iron Will that drives us forward in the struggle for existence; and a terrible struggle it is—so terrible that in many myths we are given to understand that the nether regions or hell of these ancients was actually part of the underworld or physical plane—a teaching Mr. Bernard Shaw has insisted on in the fourth act of his *Man and Superman*. The descent into hell has been the experience of many on earth besides Dante. But although the classical writers associate the idea of suffering for sin chiefly with this lowest realm, we must remember that it is not the only plane on which suffering is possible. Nor is our time here below necessarily all misery. A man can make life a physical hell upon earth for himself, but even when his bodily conditions are satisfactory, there are emotional and mental hells to be endured; and conversely it is possible to arrive at a condition of consciousness which is practically heaven upon earth. All along the line of evolution the hell condition of hate and separation and rebellion can be converted into the purgatorial condition of acceptance of the discipline and experiences we have earned, either through a change of heart or an alteration in the point of view.

And here we have come to another boundary and entered the Kingdom of the Fire. For all through both purgatory and hell the flames persist. The Spirit writhes in torment, yet rises ever upward, as it burns its way through all barriers, subduing matter to its own will, consuming the chaff—the outward form—as it becomes useless, darkening the realm of air with smoke and strewing the earth with ashes. Then, rising to the higher levels it flames forth clear and pure, as the burning and shining light that is capable of showing others the better way. When describing the lowest stages in the strange and eventful process, our more sensitive poets and prophets employ an imagery that is positively cruel in its intensity. The devils are chained and tortured in hell. Prometheus is bound to a rock, with an eagle tearing at his heart. Loki in the imaginative North has a punishment more awful still. In an evil moment he has been instrumental in causing the death of Baldur the Beautiful; for the work of the Spirit has terrible results at times. The Asa Gods, whose business it is to forward the evolution of fair and efficient forms through the action of the creative mind, are full of wrath; and the tale of the Fire-God's efforts to escape their vengeance is very striking in its symbolism. To begin with he builds himself a house with four aspects—a window looking each way; and there he weaves the first net ever shaped; and though he throws it into the fire when he sees them coming, and dives deep into the waters, the net is not altogether consumed and the Asa Gods learn from it how to make a net of their own, with which they set forth to catch him as he gleams through the water in the shape of a great silvery salmon. Loki swims fast, and the net is drawn up

empty. Then the meshes are made finer still, and the net cast into the very deepest pools—thought fathoming the mystery of deep emotion, and striving to catch the reflection of the Spirit there. Again Loki evades capture, rising swiftly to the surface, and swimming first towards the sea, and then inland. But Thor wades far out into the waters with the net, and Loki leaping into the air to evade it, is caught in the mighty hand of the Asa—with so sure a grip that even to this day the tails of all salmon are delicately pointed! Once caught, the Fire-god has to resume his own shape, and submit to the stern decree of the All-Father. Only the Spirit, however, can bind the Spirit; so the chains that bind Loki are of his own getting. In times gone by he has brought forth a strange and terrible progeny, and now two of his sons, having changed themselves into wolves, through the indulgence of their evil passions, have torn each other in pieces; and from their sinews are made the ropes that bind their father; stretched on four great stones he lies on a rocky eminence that overlooks the river, and from the rock above his head a venomous snake peers down at him, dropping poison upon his brow. His faithful wife, moved to compassion, stands ever by his side, holding a cup to catch the drops; but from time to time it brims over, and while she empties it the God writhes in anguish, “shaking the earth with terrible earthquakes”. The imprisoned Spirit, in its vain efforts to free itself, brings about many a disaster, and the suffering must go on so long as this age shall endure. But the great day will come when Loki’s progeny shall arise, and the fiery element hold full sway, drying up the waters and dispersing the clouds, devouring and destroying the world and all that therein is, with the

Sun, Moon and Stars, even the throne of the All-Father himself. In that great and terrible Day of the Lord, the heavens and the earth shall pass away, and there shall be no more sea. Surt of the flaming sword shall issue forth from the gates of the kingdom of Muspellheim, leading the Sons of the Flame, and as the shadows fade away, the glory and splendour of the age of things spiritual will begin.

Further than this it is hard to see, but the old *Edda*, like all great Scriptures, has a hint in it of the huge heart-beat that makes all things of which man can form a conception rhythmic in their action. Even Pralaya—the Rest of the Lord—is only an interlude. The passing away is predestined, but the time of rebirth is predestined too, and the vision ends with the prophecy of the renewal of all things, and the promise of a brighter, fairer dawn than any that has yet been known.

Isabelle M. Pagan

AN OUTLINE OF ESSENISM

By DR. RAIMOND VAN MARLE

(Continued from p. 48)

VI. ESSENISM AND JUDAISM

A CONSIDERATION of the connection between these two forms of religious thought is not only important in the examination of the history of the Essenean movement—a movement which, as we shall see, came often into conflict with orthodox Judaism—but also because it sheds a light on the genesis of Essenism. But the information we have at our disposal is unfortunately too incomplete for us ever to arrive at a definite conclusion as to whether or not Essenism is a direct descendant of Judaism. Both systems seem to have held certain similar convictions and Essenism laid special stress—for some reason not clear to us—upon many points it had in common with Judaism. The reason why these particular points were specially emphasised by the Essenes, while other features of orthodox Judaism were neglected, is certainly connected with their hidden teachings; but of these we can never get any certain information from the documents now at our disposal.

Most divergent opinions as to the origin of the Essenes have been held, as we remarked in the chapter dealing with their history—but the majority of students now admit that the Essenes were, at the time of their foundation at least, a part of the Jewish nation.

Philo and Josephus were quite definite on this point. Ritschl and Hilgenfeld incline to think that the Essenes were a purely Jewish sect, although the former authority is of the opinion that they considered themselves to be priests, after the principle of general priesthood mentioned in *Exodus*. Ewald supposes that they were a set of persons who objected to the superficiality and despotism of the Pharisees. Frankel, Graetz, and Jost hold that the whole movement originated from the conflict between the Pharisean principles and the Levitical laws for purity. They agree on the thoroughly Jewish genesis of the Essenes, and see a connection between them and the ancient Jewish asceticism. Schürer sees in Essenism an exaggeration of Pharisaism, but Zeller thinks that both found their common origin in Judaism and that there was a certain rivalry between them. He objects to Ritschl's theory of a general priesthood, remarking that the sacred meals and white garments—upon which Ritschl founds arguments for his theory—were customs too widely spread in other religions to prove any definite conclusion; so also with the frequent bath. Their asceticism tends to point to the effort of coming into personal contact with God without the intermediary of a priest; also, if each member of the community had been a priest, they would most likely have tried to form individual communities and not have retired into isolation. Marriage, sacrifice, and oil-unctions would not have been rejected; the purity ascribed to priests, however, may have influenced the Essenes.

Hilgenfeld sees in the Essenean sect a school for prophets—and for this, asceticism would be necessary; but Zeller finds nothing to prove this hypothesis, since

asceticism is often the result of religious belief and in addition there is no evidence to show that prophecy was a quality common to all Essenes. Personally I think that Zeller goes too far in his objection, as we have seen clearly that the capacity for prophecy was held in great esteem among the Essenes. In later years Hilgenfeld held a new theory *re* the origin of the sect which he connected with the Kenite Rechabites, but there is very little ground for this hypothesis.

To me it seems not impossible that, though those who formed the sect had certain knowledge handed on to them by tradition—a knowledge not shared by the whole Jewish nation—the formation of the sect itself might have been due to the unsatisfactory behaviour of the Pharisees and the laxity of observation of the law. The regular sacrifice offering was interrupted; high priests sometimes lived in the Temple, but some were appointed who, by reason of their family connection, had no claim to such high dignity; these were some of the irregularities that occurred. All this accounts for the scant veneration or respect the Essenes showed to the Temple as well as to the Jewish priests—actions which were quite in opposition to the law which in other matters they so strictly observed.

Lucius thinks it very likely that the formation of the sect must have been the result of a break with Judaism, and I suppose that the reasons just mentioned may have led to this break. He also notices that during the Syrian war, or about ten years later, a sect was formed which called itself the “Pious”. Was it the original of the Essenean sect?

Besides the principle of Levitical purity there was still another which inspired at that time many people;

it was the principle of religious individual independence, and led its followers to a certain contempt for all religious forms but to a more direct feeling for God, clinging to nothing but the idea of Jahveh. This piety which had a political as well as a religious importance found its expression in the Zelots and in the Essenes, who agreed in so many matters that Hippolytus identified the one with the other. It is probable that the observance of Levitical purity led to the formation of small circles; of these the Rechabites offered the first instance (919 B.C.), and such sects existed for several centuries. Their origin was due to a tendency towards piety which could not be brought into practice in public life. The Essenes however differ from the Rechabites and from the Nazarenes, though there may have existed some connection between all these sects. Reuss sees, in the Essenes, Ebionite Hasideans, but these appeared only during the Jewish war of independence. Tideman thinks that the Essenes are the most religious and pure offspring of the Pharisees, who politically met their death at the hands of the Zelots, but who remained still as the followers of Hillel, continuing to exist and producing the *Talmud*.¹

The Essenes may then have probably been an association of the pious amongst the Jews. The opposition of the priests gave perhaps a more definite form to the party than it otherwise would have assumed, but afterwards the members were linked together by a feeling of solidarity and of facing a common enemy. Also their strict purity, by which association with people other than those belonging to the sect became undesirable and which made it impossible for them to eat

¹ Tideman, pp. 43—50.

anything of which they did not know the origin, made their close association among themselves as well as their separation from others almost a necessity. It seems that the Essenes made from their retired dwelling-places a sort of propaganda by their writings. We do not know what books they had, though Jost gives some names. It even may be that the Essenes exercised some influence on the canon of the Jewish books and several authorities admit also their influence on the Christians in the first centuries of our era. Essenism was of course considered to be a heresy by the Jews and even Ezekiel's writings were held in less respect amongst them, as they furnished some texts on which the Essenes based their secret teachings. The heresy was only admitted in later years into the Jewish School and then also studied by the Babylonian Jews; but before that time we see that the Rabbis, Simon ben Azai and Simon ben Zoma, had become ascetics and were killed; also the fall of Rabbi Elisha ben Abuja was thus caused, though Rabbi Akiba had studied it without harm. When, afterwards, the doctrines of the Essenes were accepted, we see that the Rabbis proceeded to hold the teaching that there are two ministering angels who accompany each man, and that there are also evil angels who are half human beings—an idea which is deduced from the secret teachings of the Essenes.¹ It has also been said—though the statement dates from later times—that already at that period Kabalistic books existed in the locality near the Dead Sea where the Essenes had lived. That the law of the Nazarenes became more severe is certainly due also to Essenean influence. This law, which tended so much towards exaggeration, found many disciples

¹ Tideman, 61. Jost, ii, p. 97—105. Graetz, iv, 65—107.

after the time of banishment, as, for instance, Queen Helena, and Maria of Palmyra. Frankel thinks that some of the ordinances concerning health and medicine in the *Talmud* might be of Essenean origin. Tideman thinks that Frankel is wrong when he ascribes to the Essenes the prescriptions which were supposed to save man from danger to life, but both agree that most probably those passages in the *Talmud* are of Essenean origin where we find that some men pretend to possess remedies which come from angels.

Some of the authorities seem doubtful as to whether there are references to the Essenes in the *Talmud*. Herzfeld criticises the passages which look as if they referred to the Essenes and of which some were quoted by Derenbourg and Frankel.¹ The difficulties in them consist in that those who are considered to be Essenes seem to be on very good terms with the Temple, a thing which is very unlikely. Tideman does not agree with Herzfeld, who finds in *Tosifta Succa*, § 3, *Tosifta Menachat*, Chap. 10, the school of Essenes. But in "The Pious" (especially as described in the *Tosifta Sota*, Chap. XV and in the *Zohar*, ii, 180a) who prayed before sunrise, and whose piety included deep knowledge, it is likely that we can trace the Essenes. Weinstein² speaks of a passage in the *Talmud* which gives a description of people who remind us in some points of the Essenes, in that they rejected wine and did not smear their bodies with oil. He points out still another passage in Rashi's comments on *Mishna Chagiga*, 16 a, where an Essenean Jose ben Joe becomes the leader of a party who may all have been Essenes

¹ The discussion goes chiefly over Kiddushim, 71 a; Demai, vi, 6. Rabbi Josue ben Levi; *Succa*, 51a. *Sota*, 49a.

² P. 23.

observing the prescription of Sabbath rest so strictly that they would not lay on hands, on that day. I quoted already some names—chiefly on Weinstein's authority—of Essenes which appear in the *Talmud*, Rabbis Pinchas ben Jair, Eleazer ben Hyrkana.

Weinstein believes in the great influence of the Essenes on the *Talmud*. A great part of the *Mishna*, from which later on the *Talmud* developed itself, was brought by Hosea from his teacher, Eleazer Hakapar, from the South. Rabbi Akiba had also lived in the South, and the 613 ordinances and prohibitions of the Jewish religion came through the Essenean, Rabbi Simlai, from the South. There was however a certain contempt for these scholars of the South; the patriarchs turned so much against them that envoys had to be sent to the South to make peace again. The South of Palestine held always a great attraction for those who wanted to learn, and many went there; Weinstein assumes that it is to them that we owe the doctrines of letters and numbers.

The great divergency between Essenes and Jews arose from the disbelief of the former in the value of the Second Temple and their respect for the traditional Halacha—law—instead of the Halacha of the Pharisees which was drawn from the Scriptures. Weinstein describes the difference in the point of view, saying that the Pharisees held the theory that as soon as a law has no connection with human life, it cannot have any thing to do with the Mosaic code. In the Halacha of the Pharisees this principle was worked out, and the second building of the Temple had as its purpose the regulation of the life of the citizen and the safeguarding of Judaism from ruin. With the Essenes the Mosaic law was not a way, but a principle of life to fulfil the divine

prescriptions. The more they took it into consideration, the less they paid attention to daily life. The Essenes traced their Halacha back to the three last prophets, Haggai, Zachariah and Malachai, but Frankel finds it very doubtful that Haggai should be considered as the founder of their Halacha.¹ He admits a mistaken reading of the Hebrew text, and suggests that it should be Choni, the wonder-worker, who was a contemporary of Simeon ben Schetach, living about 110 B.C. Weinstein argues that this is not possible as in the *Talmud* the Essenean Choni is known under another name. It looks as if the difference of opinion on the value of the transmitted and of the deduced Halacha was the origin of very great difficulties between the Essenes and the Pharisees. The unlearned Temple priests made attacks on the pious ascetics, separated themselves from them, and made the formation of the sect more and more definite. We have already seen how the members of the sect had to swear to adhere to the transmitted Halacha only, and to no other doctrine save that. As Weinstein remarks, the division between Essenes and Pharisees might have been still greater, if the first had not seen in the Patriarch Hillel a descendant of the race of David, against whom it was very strictly forbidden to revolt.² Rabbi Jose ben Chalafta was of Essenean origin, and devoted to the Essenes but was at the same time one of the most important disciples of Rabbi Akiba who founded, so to say, the *Talmud*, and connected all the Jewish laws with the Scriptures. Rabbi Jose held the opinion that, if the Halacha should exist for all time, it should have a criterion and be

¹ Frankel: *Monatschr. für Gesch u Wissensch. des Judenth.*, 1853, p. 37.

² *Shabbath*, xiv, 4.

capable of development. The Essenes did not want to have anything to do with the matter. They retired to South Palestine in self-defence from religious persecution, and here they planned an opposition against the Scriptures deduced from the Halacha and the power of the Nasi whom Rabbi Jose had proclaimed to be the representative of the authority of David. The division between Essene and Pharisee, on account of the difference in their understanding of the law, lasted till the end of the second century, as is proved by the story of Rabbi Mair, after whose death the Nasi ordered that his disciples should not be admitted to the house of learning on account of their being quarrelsome.

Rabbi Akiba proved to his teacher, who was in favour of the transmitted Halacha, that it was not reliable, and to Rabbi Tarfon he showed that he was mistaken even in his priestly Halacha. Rabbi Akiba pointed out that the transmitted Halacha ought to be justified by the deduced Halacha. The troubles came to an end when Rabbi Tarfon—whose teachings were accepted by all Israel—proclaimed this openly. But it was at the same time admitted that for the life of the Mosaic law, the derivation from the Scriptures was necessary. This peaceful solution was due to Rabbi Akiba before whose time great troubles, even manslaughter in the house of learning, had taken place.¹

We will now consider the striking difference which we find between the religious practices of the orthodox Jews and the Essenes, and see whether even in some of the Jewish writings we cannot find the origin of these differences, as we have occasionally attempted in the previous chapter. I have said already that a very

¹ Weinstein, pp. 35-40.

important point is the disregard which the Essenes had for the Second Temple, but there are other striking facts. We find that the Essenes are opposed to animal offerings, the use of unction-oil, keeping serfs, and swearing. Then we find further that the Essenes endued water with a mystical purifying power and believed in a separate origin of the soul, which existed also apart from the body, and that they gave a much greater importance to the angels. It is certainly not orthodox Judaism to proclaim that no one was obliged to live according to the law as soon as he understood deeper things, nor, furthermore, is the Essenean conception of life after death Jewish. Many of these peculiarities are to be traced back to Jewish origins, but all the same the question remains: Why did the Essenes follow these authorities rather than those of the Temple? The understanding of these points might give us an insight into Jewish esoteric teachings, which escapes us entirely at the moment.

The disregard for the Second Temple as well as for the sacrifices performed by its priests, to which they preferred their own sacrifices, is also manifested in the *Book of Enoch*,¹ which does not teach that God has gone into the Second Temple neither that it is a real sanctuary of God. Enoch does not attach any importance to the sacrifices which were performed there and in this echoes the opinion of a whole party holding the same opinion, which is also expressed in some of the passages of Solomon, of the *Psalms* and Moses' Apocalypses. The doctrine which the Essenes held about the lovely place where the souls of the righteous go after death is also in accordance with *Enoch*²; the fate of the evil

¹ lxxxix, 58; lxxxix, 73.

² xxii, 1—3.

man who died is there to be found too,¹ and probably also the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul,² a doctrine anyhow known amongst the Rabbis. The *Kohleth*³ speaks also of the survival of the soul after death. In *Enoch*⁴ as well as in the books of *Daniel* and *Job* we find a much greater importance given to the angels than in the orthodox Jewish religion, but in accord with the Essenean doctrines; the same was the case as regards the doctrine about the formation of the universe.

Though we find in *Leviticus* the commandment to bring animal sacrifices⁵ (there we also see that the use of oil, as well as the oath, are admitted), yet all the same, there are many points in Essenism which find their equivalent and perhaps their origin in this book. To begin with we find in *Leviticus* prescriptions about purity which seem to have found in the Essenes an attentive public. Their abstinence is also explained by this law of Moses. Blood was impure according to this law, and was to be avoided. The Essenes in their vegetarianism went only a little further in observing the same principle. Wine was considered to pollute the actions of the priests; therefore, again exaggerating the same prescription, the Essenes refrained entirely from using it. The Mosaic law spoke of *effusio seminis virilis* as something impure,⁶ and the Essenes went further than that by regarding celibacy as always preferable to marriage, while the Pharisees, on the contrary, went so far as not to give the name of human beings to unmarried people,

¹ xxii, 10; xxvii, 3—11.

² lxxxix, 58.

³ iii, 21; xii, 7.

⁴ vi, 6; xxi, lxxxii, 10.

⁵ Beginning of chapters iv and v.

⁶ *Levit*, xv, 16—18.

though they also put children as the only aim of marriage. In *Leviticus*¹ it is said that Jews should not have possessions of which they could not be dispossessed. The Essenes transformed this into community of goods. The Pharisees also encouraged liberal giving of goods to others, a consequence whereof is the giving up of wealth. We have already mentioned the rigid purifications observed after the performance of certain natural functions. This is in accordance with *Deuteronomy*. The severity with which the Sabbath was observed might find its origin in the school of Schammai, which was known for its strictness on this point. For the ordinary Jews much was forbidden on that day. As to the prayers said at sunrise, I have stated already that there was mention of the Sun in *Isaiah*,² as also in the *Wisdom of Solomon*,³ the *Psalms*⁴ and *Enoch*,⁵ in which last is also mention of prayer at sunrise.⁶ Lucius remarks further that just as the Essenes were not allowed to let the rays of the sunshine shine on their nakedness, the Jews were not allowed to expose themselves towards the Temple.

The prohibition of the use of oil unctions is said to be the consequence of the care which was taken not to come into contact with strangers, or things made by them; but I do not see why the Essenes should not have made their own oil if they had found the use of it necessary. As to the curious rule of not spitting to the right or straight before one—of which Herzfeld⁷ found the equivalent in the

¹ *Levit.*, xxv, 23.

² *Isaiah*, xlv, 7.

³ *Wisdom*, xvi, 28.

⁴ *Psalms*, ii, 13-14; iv, 21; viii, 8.

⁵ *Enoch*, lxxii, 35; x, xiii, 3.

⁶ *Idem*, lxxxiii, 11.

⁷ Herzfeld, iii, 389.

Talmud—two explanations are offered to us, both based on Jewish belief. Reville¹ thinks that the origin of this prohibition might be the respect for the guiding angel who is supposed—in other Rabbinic advices—to be in front or at the right hand side of a person. This is the more likely, as we have just seen that the Essenes also believed in two guiding angels. Derenbourg² sees in it a result of the Jewish habit of not sneezing before some one else in order not to disgust him, as ultimately we should have to render an account of such involuntary acts. Reville's explanation seems to me the more probable one, though of course nothing can be said with any certainty. The superphysical and perhaps magical knowledge of the Essenes may also have had a purely Jewish origin, as has already been stated. They may have known the so-called prescriptions of King Solomon; and also Jesus Sirach³ has been taken into consideration. Regarding their knowledge about stones, perhaps the explanation in *Leviticus*⁴ may have some bearing, also the suggestion that the Jewish Prophets knew how to take poison out of drinking water and food.⁵

A very important likeness between Judaism and Essenism is the fact that meals were taken in common by the Essenes, and we find an equivalent in the meals at which the priests of Israel sat together. Ritschl⁶ sees in those meals of the Essenes a principal part of their ceremonies, and without any doubt they really had a religious character. Tideman⁷ reminds us how the

¹ Reville, I, p. 140.

² Derenbourg, p. 170.

³ Jesus Sirach, xxxiii, 1—16.

⁴ *Leviticus*, xiv, 37-40.

⁵ *2 Kings*, II, 19—21; v; 38—39; xx, 7—8.

⁶ *Alt Cath. Kirche.*, p. 184.

⁷ p. 24—6.

priests in Jerusalem took meals together, which were products of the altar or from the taxes of the tithe, so that they had a religious significance. The Pharisees arranged meals on the pattern of the Easter meals at which benedictions were said. These Pharisean repasts were found to be equivalent to the sacrifices of the altar; it was said to be the table of God, to which only certain people were admitted and the others had to remain outside. Those who had the right to come to these meals were called "Chabers" and it has been supposed that the Essenes were an association of such. Their common meals which—on the principle of the Pharisees—were equivalent to the sacrifices of the altar, entitled them to refrain from the sacrifices of the Temple. This hypothesis solves, indeed, one of the great difficulties in the understanding of the Essenic system.

As Lucius points out we do not really know enough of the common belief of the Jews to state always how far Essenism agreed with it. In some cases we know that they differ, and, though it is often possible to trace the Essenean variations back to Jewish documents, the question still remains, why the Essenees held on some matters another opinion from that of the orthodox Jews. Were they the inheritors of an old esoteric tradition, unknown to the orthodox Jews, and were the differences which we find due to their knowledge of that tradition?

In another chapter we shall consider how much religions other than Judaism may have contributed to the formation of this Essenean conviction, or at least what points of similarity may exist.

Raimond van Marle

(To be continued)

THE QABĀLĀH

By ELIAS GEWÜRZ

THE principal textbook of the Qabālāh, the *Zohar* contains a great variety of teachings on the inner life; the most prominent among these are the three doctrines of the Unity of God and the Universe, the law of cause and effect, and the law of spiritual evolution by means of rebirth. "Man," says the *Zohar*, "represents in his constitution the whole of the Universe"; but, as the Rabbis are careful to explain, man contains in his spiritual part something which is higher than anything manifested in this Universe. This is the Divine particle undergoing evolution, for whose sake all the cosmic processes are going on. The individualised soul of man, the Qabālāh teaches, can outstrip the regular course of the Cosmos, and attain unto perfection earlier in her career, through the cycles of birth and death on the various planes. In God all souls are one, but apart from Him they are set against one another. Therefore in this world of manifestation, unless the two souls are united by one purpose which they both strive to fulfil, discord is almost inevitable whenever two people find their lots thrown together. Even when the immediate object is material gain, or physical pleasure, as in business or marriage relationships, it always smooths over the rough places if there is a spiritual tie of some sort between the partners. There are, of course, unions, by which no ideal purpose

whatever is served, as for instance in unscrupulous enterprises where the sole object is gain, or in marriages in which the motive is to raise one's social position; but all these prove sooner or later the degrading character of such a union by the consequences. The misery suffered by the participants demonstrates the inviolable character of nature's laws; therefore the Masters of the Holy Qabālāh warned their disciples "to eschew all intērcourse in which no heart or love element enters". Final liberation can only be reached by union with the Highest, but as at the present the world as a whole is not yet ready for this happy consummation, the soul of the advanced disciple must be content when she finds another soul, or several other souls going in the same direction as herself, and, joining forces, they hasten their own evolution by working for those who are less advanced, as yet unfit for Union with God.

All souls are homeward bound, but all do not progress at the same pace. What most hinders a soul on her upward path is what the Indian Sages called "the heresy of separateness". "If the soul looks down to form and matter," says Rabbi Eleazar, "and believes that she can be happy while other souls suffer, then she is doomed; but if she looks up to the source of all light and prays for wings in order to lift her sister-souls heavenward, then the angels of mercy gather above her and lift her and all those she pleads for, into a place of safety." The beauty of the Zoharic teachings consists in this continual recurrence of the doctrine of Unity, and the supreme potency of love to save and to redeem. The world process, according to the Qabālāh, is going on in the mind of collective humanity; it is here that

havoc is wrought through sin and perversity, and above all through the illusion of separateness. "The children of the Gnosis, who know the Father of lights," says the author of *The Golden Gate*, "always work for peace." The gracious purposes of the Most High can only be furthered by peace and by love. On those planes where force and violence are still required for the evolution of the species, individuals are provided with whose nature this lower work is in accord, "but they too," says the Qabālāh, "should not be left in ignorance of God's mercies".

The object of life in the manifested worlds is to prepare the essence of light and to weave the glorious garments of the Supreme Sovereign of all the worlds. Such is the teaching of the Qabālāh. The immortal merit of the Qabālistic writings is their freedom from dogma and from all sorts of limitations in regard to race, creed, or colour; their antiquity is proved by the greatest scholars to antedate the most ancient teachings of the East, and shows how the Wisdom Religion was really never absent, though not commonly known. Primitive humanity was not deprived of teachers, and to our earliest ancestors the doctrine of Unity was proclaimed. It was only owing to the exigencies of the inexorable "iron age" that these beautiful teachings have been forgotten, and have lost all their practical significance.

The stumbling-block in the way of the lower mind, preventing it from perceiving the Oneness of the human race and the sacred character of human life, is the limitation of its perspective to the present existence.

Life is one continuous whole without a break and without a definite line of demarcation. This truth was

known to the august Masters of the Qabālāh who taught "that the very fact that the wisdom of God is not perceived by the ungodly is itself a provision of that wisdom". "Like the ultra-violet and infra-red rays of the spectrum, which escape the naked eye, so does the effulgent light of God escape the lower mind of man," says one of the disciples of Rabbi Simeon Ben Jochai.

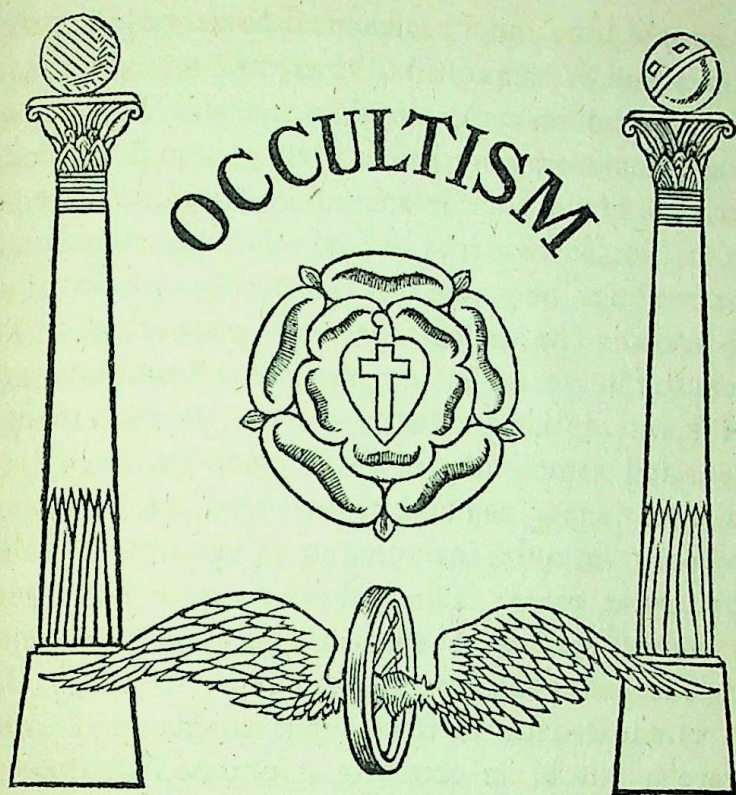
At the present time the teachings of the Qabālāh deserve special attention; the critical period in the world's history through which we are passing will be better understood, if we know the foundations of the Wisdom Religion and the precepts of the Genius which presided over them, when they were delivered to the eager pupils in order to be handed down to future generations. It is, of course, impossible to give here more than a brief outline of what the Qabālāh is, but those sincerely interested in Theosophy should *study* the Qabālāh at its source.

The process of crystallisation going on at the present moment in the higher strata of thought, and the gradual emergence of a new type in which the excrescences of the cold and frozen intellectualism of the eighteenth century has disappeared, had been foreseen by the old Qabālists; they often spoke of the "*dualised*" mind-principle, which not only knows, but loves as well. This new type can be distinguished by many signs, and it seems to me that of all the spiritual movements afoot in the world the Theosophical Society has among its members the greatest number of souls of this type; but in the Society itself this process of natural selection is still going on. In fact I believe that all the storms the Society has passed through were destined to try and test the quality of this new type.

To my mind the Theosophical Society is the natural heir of the Wisdom of the Ages; its members are the guardians and stewards of this precious heritage, and they are responsible for the safe-keeping and profitable investment of the treasures in their charge. What was once known to the few as the Holy Qabālāh is now proclaimed far and wide as Theosophy; it is all the same teaching and emanates from the same source. The object of the old Qabālists was to warn people against the misuse of the higher forces and to urge them to consecrate them to "the Lords of the White Face"; the mission of the Theosophical Society is just the same.

The great confusion consequent upon the inrush of occult powers which the world is now experiencing can only be lessened by obedience to the teachings of the Holy Qabālāh which are the same as the Theosophical ones. Consecration to the service of mankind, purity of life, gentleness and humility, and, above all, devotion to the Holy Ones, were the precepts of the Rabbis in the Schools of the Qabālāh. There is nothing to add to these when equipping ourselves for the treading of the path. We need nothing more, and nothing less will do. More important than the vision is obedience to it. Most of us can see, but few have the strength to obey. Let us ponder over these sublime things of the ancients, and try once more whether we can be humble servants of the merciful Lords; and while performing our duties to them we may perchance find that peace, which we failed to find in any other way.

Elias Gewürz



HOW WE REMEMBER OUR PAST LIVES

By C. JINARAJADASA, M.A.

(Continued from Vol. XXXV, Part II, p. 682)

WE have so far been considering the manifestations of an individual's emotional nature, and it is obvious that because of his own experiences he will be able to understand the emotions of others, so long as such emotions are in the main of like nature. But what of those individuals who thoroughly understand such experiences as have not come to them? Shakespeare understands the working of a woman's heart and mind, and, too, all the intricate mental and emotional

processes of the traitor; Dickens knows how the murderer feels after committing the crime.

Furthermore, some gifted men and women, experiencing emotions, generalise from them to what is experienced by all, while one not so gifted, though once "bitten," is not twice "shy," nor is made appreciably wiser by the same experience coming to him over and over again. The gifted few, on the other hand, will fathom the universal quality in a single experience, and from it will anticipate many of like nature; for themselves, and sometimes for others too, they will state their experiences reduced to algebraic formulæ, as it were, each formula including in one general statement all particular cases. Their thoughts and feelings are like aphorisms, with the transformation of many experiences into one Experience.

Now to generalise from our particular emotions is as rare a gift as to originate a philosophy from the particular thoughts we gain about things. Yet it is this generalisation from particular emotions that is characteristic of a poet, and the more universal are his generalisations the greater is he as poet. Why then should an individual here and there have this wonderful ability of seeing particular men as representatives of types, and particular emotions as expressions of universal emotions? We say that such a man is a genius, but the word genius merely describes and does not explain. There are geniuses in every department of life—religion, poetry, art, music, statesmanship, the drama, generalship in war and in commerce, and in many other phases of life. These geniuses are characterised by many abnormal qualities; they are always men of the future and not of their day, and each genius

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is a lawgiver to future generations in his own department of activity; and above all, they live emotionally and mentally in wide generalisations. Whence comes this wonderful ability?

One explanation offered is Heredity. But how far does heredity really explain genius? According to the hitherto accepted theory of heredity, each generation adds a little to a quality brought from the generation before, and then transmits it to the next; this in turn adds a little, and passes on the total of what it has received plus its own contribution; and so on generation after generation, till we arrive at a particular generation, and one individual of it, in whom the special quality in some mysterious way gets concentrated, and that individual is thereby a genius. According to this popular theory, some remote ancestor of Shakespeare had a fraction of Shakespeare's genius, which he transmitted through heredity to his offspring; this offspring then, keeping intact what was given him by his parent, added to the stock from his own experiences, and then passed on both to his child; and so on in successive generations, each generation treasuring what is given to it from all previous generations, and adding something of its own before transmitting it to the next. Shakespeare then is as the torrent from a reservoir that has slowly been dammed up, but bursts its sides when the pressure has passed beyond a certain point.

Such a conception of heredity is based upon the assumption that what an individual acquires of faculty as the result of adaptability to his environment is passed on to his offspring. Such is indeed the conclusion that the Darwinian school of biologists came to from their analysis of what happens in nature. But biological

research during the last twenty-five years has been largely directed to testing the validity of the theory of the transmission of acquired characteristics, and not only has not one indisputable instance yet been found, all experiments in breeding and crossing on the other hand accumulate proofs to the contrary.

The new school of biologists known as the Mendelians have therefore come to theories about heredity that are not only novel but startling. According to them, structural characteristics, upon which must depend the mental and moral capacities of an individual, existed in *every* ancestor in their fullness; and further they must all have been in the first speck of living matter. Nothing has been *added* by evolution to this original stock of capacities in protoplasm, and every genius the world has known or will know existed potentially in it, though he had to wait millions of years before there arose the appropriate arrangement of the "genetic factors" to enable him to appear as a genius on the evolutionary stage. Nature has not evolved the complex brain structure of Shakespeare out of the rudimentary brains of the mammals; that complexity existed in a pin-head of protoplasm. Nature has not evolved the genius; she has merely *released* him from the fetters that bound him in the primordial protoplasm, by eliminating, generation after generation, such genetic factors as inhibited his manifestation. Bateson sums up these modern theories when he says: "I have confidence that the artistic gifts of mankind will prove to be due not to something added to the make-up of an ordinary man, but to the absence of factors which in the normal person inhibit the development of these gifts. They are almost beyond doubt to be looked upon as *releases* of powers

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normally suppressed. The instrument is there, but it is 'stopped down'." ¹

Time alone will show how far the Mendelian conception will need to be modified by later discoveries; but it is fairly certain already that the older Darwinian conception of heredity is untenable, and that if a man is a genius he owes very little to the intellectual and emotional achievements of his ancestors. If however we admit with the Mendelians that a genius is "released" merely by the removal of inhibiting factors, and is not the result of slow accumulations, we have still the original mystery unsolved, and that is to explain the synthetic ability of the genius. We are therefore no nearer really explaining the nature of genius along Mendelian theories than along the Darwinian; the theories of science merely tell us under what conditions genius will or will not manifest, but nothing more.

The only rational theory of genius, that accepts scientific facts as to heredity and also explains what genius is, comes from the conception of reincarnation. If we hold that an individual is a soul, that is, an imperishable and evolving ego, and manifests through a body appropriate to his stage of growth and to a work he is to do in that body, then we see that his emotional and mental attributes are the results of experiences he has gained in past lives; but since he can express them only through a suitable body and brain, these then must be of such a kind as nature has by heredity selected for such use. The manifestation of any capacity then depends on two indispensable factors, first an ego or consciousness who has developed that capacity by

¹ Presidential Address, British Association, 1914.

repeated experiments in past lives, and second, a suitable instrument, a physical body, of such a nature structurally as makes possible the expression of that capacity. When therefore we consider genius, if on the one hand a particular genius has not a body fashioned out of genetic factors that do not inhibit his genius, he is "stopped down," to use Bateson's simile, and his genius is unreleased; but if on the other hand nature were to produce a thousand bodies that were not "stopped down," we should not *ipso facto* have a thousand geniuses. Two lines of evolution must therefore converge before there can manifest any quality that is not purely functional, the first being that of the evolution of an indestructible consciousness that continually experiments with life and slowly becomes expert thereby, and the second the evolution of a physical structure, that by heredity is selected to respond to a given stimulus from within.

If, with this clue as to what is happening in nature, we examine the various geniuses the world has produced, we shall see that they are remembering their past lives as they exhibit their genius. Take for instance such a genius as the young violinist Mischa Elman, who a few years ago began his musical career; he was then but a lad, and yet even at that age he manifested marvellous technical ability. Now we may perhaps legitimately account for this technical ability along Mendelian lines, as being due to a rare confluence of genetic factors; but by no theory of physical heredity can we explain what surprised the most exacting of musical critics—Mischa Elman's *interpretation* of music. For it is just in this interpretation that a music lover can see the soul of the performer, whether that

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soul is a big one or a little, whether the performer has known of life superficially or has touched life's core. Now Elman's interpretation, absolutely spontaneous as it was, and unimitated from a teacher, was that of a man and not that of a boy. Little wonder that many a critic was puzzled, or that the musical critic of the *London Telegraph* should write as follows:

Rain beat noisily upon the roof and thunder roared and rattled, but Mischa Elman went calmly on with his prescribed Paganini and Bach and Wieniawski. Calmly is the word, be it noted, not stolidly. We have had stolid wonder-children on our musical platforms; Mischa is not of them. Upon his face, as he plies the bow, rests a great peace, and only now and then, with a more decided expression, does he lower his cheek upon the instrument, as though he would receive from it the impulse of its vibrations and to it communicate his own soul beats. The marvel of this boy does not lie in his execution of difficult passages. If it did, perhaps we should award it but perfunctory notice, seeing that among the children of our generation there are so many who play with difficult passages much as their predecessors did with marbles. We have gone beyond mere dexterity in bowing and fingering, and can say, in the spirit of one of old time, that from the babe and suckling comes now the perfection of such praise as lies within the compass of a violin.

Asked to account for this—to explain why Mischa Elman, laying cheek to wood, reveals the insight and feeling of a man who has risen to the heights and plumbed the depths of human life—we simply acknowledge that the matter is beyond us. We can do no more than speculate, and, perhaps, hope for a day in which the all-embracing science of an age more advanced than our own shall discover the particular brain formation, or adjustment, to which infants owe the powers that men and women vainly seek. Those powers may be the Wordsworthian "clouds of glory," brought from another world. If so, what a brilliant birth must that of Mischa Elman have been! The boy was heard in a work by Paganini and another by Wieniawski, both good things of their meretricious kind, and both irradiated, as we could not but fancy, by the unconscious genius which shines alike on the evil and the good, making the best of both. Upon the mere execution of these works we do not dwell, preferring the charm of the moments in which the music lent itself to the mysterious emotion of the youthful player, and showed, not the painted visage of a mountebank, but the face of an angel!

If along lines of reincarnation we suppose that Mischa Elman is a soul who in his past lives has in truth "risen to the heights and plumbed the depths of human life," then we have a reasonable explanation for his genius; in each interpretation there is reflected the summing up of his past experiences, and he can through his music tell us of a man's sorrow or a man's joy because as a man in past lives he has experienced both, and retains their memory in emotional and intellectual generalisations. This explanation further joins hands with science, because the reincarnation theory of genius implies the need of the musical soul, of a body with a musical heredity, that has been "selected" by evolution and has been built up by appropriate genetic factors.

Reincarnation alone explains another genius who must remain a puzzle according to all other theories. Keats is known in English poetry as the most "Greek" of all England's poets; he possessed naturally that unique feeling for life that was the treasure of the Greek temperament. If he had been a Greek scholar and steeped in the traditions of Greek culture, we might account for this "*anima naturaliter Graeca* of the Greekless Keats". But when we consider that Keats had "little Latin and less Greek," and began life as a surgeon's apprentice and a medical student, we may well wonder why he sings not as a Christian poet should do, but as some Greek shepherd born on the slopes of Mount Etna. The wonder however at once ceases if we presume that Keats is the reincarnation of a Greek poet, and is remembering his past lives as he reverts to Greek ways of thought and feeling.

With reincarnation as a clue it is interesting to see how a little analysis enables us to say where in the

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past an individual must have lived. In the culture of the West, there are three main types of "reversion," to Rome, to Greece, and to India. Any one who has studied Roman institutions and the Roman conception of life finds little difficulty in noting how the English temperament is largely that of ancient Rome in a modern garb; the values, for instance in history, of such historians as Gibbon, Macaulay, Hume, are practically the same as those of Roman historians, Sallust, Tacitus, Livy, and the rest; whereas if we were to take French historians we shall find them scarcely at all Roman in temperament, and far more akin to the Greek. The equation Tennyson=Vergil is certainly not far-fetched to those that know the quality of both poets.

The reversion to Greece we find very clear in such writers as Goethe, Schiller, Lessing. Why should these writers have proclaimed to Germany with unbounded enthusiasm the message of "back to Greece," but that they knew from their own experience in past lives what Greek culture had still for men? For what is enthusiasm but the spring forward of the soul to experience a freshness and delight in life that it has known elsewhere and whose call it recognises again? These men of enthusiasm, the pioneers of the future, are as sports or freaks in nature otherwise; let us but think of them as reincarnated souls remembering in their enthusiasm their past lives, and they become not sports but the first-fruits of a glorious humanity that is to be.

Who that has studied Platonism has not been reminded of Platonic conceptions when reading Emerson? Though Emerson has not the originality nor the daring of Plato, yet is he truly "Greek"; it does not require such a great flight of the imagination to see him

as some Alexandrian follower of Plato. How natural then too that Emerson should enter the ministry to give his message, but should find himself unable to do it as a *Christian* minister, and should strike out a path for himself as an essayist to speak of the World-Soul! And who that has studied Indian philosophies does not recognise old Vedāntin philosophers in Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and a Buddhist philosopher in Schopenhauer, all reverting to their philosophic interests of past lives, and uttering their ancient convictions more brilliantly than ever before? Wherever the deeper layers of a man's being are offered to the world in some creation through philosophy, literature, art, or science, there may we note tendencies started in past lives; for the pageant of a man's life is not planned and achieved in the few brief years that begin with his birth, and he that knows of reincarnation may note readily enough where the parts of that pageant were composed.

C. Jinarajadasa

{ *To be concluded* }

THE INCARNATION OF PAN

By F. HADLAND DAVIS

(Author of *Father of Flowers*, *The Land of the Yellow Spring*, etc.)

ONE summer day I had spent many hours in a Devonshire wood. A thousand sights and sounds had delighted me. I had taken a book out with me. But who can read the printed page when everywhere the trees and flowers are telling tales more wonderful than those written in books?

It was nearly ten o'clock in the evening when I rose to go. I walked slowly, loath to leave that charmed spot. I had often on such occasions looked with a certain amount of curiosity at an old house on the outskirts of the wood. There were strange stories about the present owner. Tales told in country inns over a tankard of brown ale by rustics who, like the owners of the old house, added a bit here and a bit there with each additional telling. I had listened to these stories with incredulous amusement. From all accounts the present owner was in league with the Devil. So many people who choose a way out of the general running are said to be in league with the Devil.

That particular night I stood looking at the house longer than usual. The blinds were not drawn down in

a lower room, and the bright light and wide-open window enabled me to see the interior with remarkable clearness. I saw, sitting in a chair, the most remarkable-looking man I have ever seen. On the hearth-rug in front of him were strewn a number of flowers, and on either side of the chair were piles of books. He was reading with extraordinary eagerness and rapidity. Sometimes one finger would race along a line, stop, and then go on again. Sometimes he would give a low, haunting laugh, and at other times he would bang the open book with his fist. Now he closed the book, rose, and lifted from the hearth-rug a number of flowers, as many as he could hold in both arms. He buried his face in them and talked to them in a soft caressing way. Then he laid them gently down again and walked briskly to the open window and looked out. Our eyes met. There was something eerie in that look of his. Then he smiled, with almost the same effect as when a dog shows his teeth. It was a malignant smile, and yet for all that irresistible.

He stretched forth his arm and beckoned to me.

I drew closer. There might have been cords to that beckoning finger of his. I could do no other than obey his silent summons.

"Well, Stranger," he said, in a curiously musical voice, "so my doings interest you?"

"I must apologise for intruding upon your privacy," I said. "Your doings certainly did interest me, and I hope that will be sufficient excuse for my looking into your charming room. You have a love of flowers?"

"I love Nature," he replied simply. "You walk abroad rather late in the evening, Stranger? The birds have rolled themselves into feathered balls for many

hours now. I keep late hours, too. *So much happens in a wood at night!*"

When he mentioned the word "wood," I saw a strange expression flit across his face. It was the expression of a lover who has suddenly discovered something of what Love may mean.

"Stranger, the hour is late, and perhaps you have far to go, but if you will come in for a little while I may be able to entertain you after my own fashion."

I readily accepted the invitation. A moment later I was sitting in a chair opposite to this extraordinary man.

"Few people come to this wood," said my host, "but I often see a little bald man with a green butterfly-net. He races round trees; he tramples down flowers; he falls into the brook, but nothing matters so long as he catches butterflies. The small coloured creatures, blossoms that have learnt to fly, get into his net sometimes, and the bald-headed man smiles as he drops them into his poison-bottle. Oh, that abominable poison-bottle! It takes so long to kill. I know that old man goes home and sets his specimens out on a cork with pins and strips of paper. Presently he will transfer them to his collection, when they might have been drinking honey from the flowers. I should like to put that man into a big poison-bottle and pin down those fat, eager legs and arms of his!"

My host spoke with grim earnestness. Then he went on with even more vigour:

"I once saw a man who has a mania for collecting the green-brown eggs of blackbirds and the blue-brown eggs of thrushes. He has hundreds of them in large drawers. All those eggs came from the love-making

of birds, Stranger. Ah! when spring comes there are such happy marriages in birdland, such joy in building homes. And then the eggs come. Spring-time is calling, calling in the woods, but the birds sit so patiently upon their eggs. They know why they keep them warm, and they sing little snatches of song for very joy of keeping them warm. Then comes a heavy foot-fall, and cruel fingers dive into the nest. The treasures of coloured shell, with life and song for many a golden spring are taken away, pierced and blown. Oh, Stranger, I weep when I think of that man's collection of eggs and of all the sweet and wonderful song lost for ever to the world!"

My friend lifted again the flowers as I had seen him do, when watching him from the wood. Once more he spoke to them in a strange language I could not understand, and it seemed that the flowers answered him. He smiled at what they said.

"You play?" I queried, looking at a piano in one corner of the room. "Perhaps you will favour me with something from Chopin?"

"I will play," said he, "but my music is not like the music of musicians or of composers such as you name. They thunder in the bass, trill in the treble, juggle with sharps and flats, and all the time their music comes from innumerable hammers inside their instruments! My music comes from yonder wood, from distant caves by the sea, from great mountains shrouded in mist. Listen!"

He rose and went to the piano and rested his long fingers on the keys. He did not strike the notes. He caressed them. I find it difficult to describe what followed. For some time I was too utterly surprised to

appreciate fully what I heard. When the feeling of surprise lessened I leant forward and listened intently, afraid lest the slightest sound should escape me.

I heard the music of the wood. Words seem dull and cold to describe my impressions. I heard the soft wash of the sea upon the shingle, the quick gurgling rush as it swept between the rocks and then lay still in pools. I heard the breaking of little waves, the fall of those blue-white water-curls. I heard the song of trees, the rustle of dry autumn leaves, the soft fall of rain, and then the sound of raging forests, lashed and twisted by the fierce wind. "I will take you by force," the wind seemed to say. "I will lay you low, O stately ones of long standing! I will hurl you down. I will tear out your secrets. I will hurt you in your hidden places under the earth." And the forests answered back with thunderous voice: "Lay your strong cold arms about us, and twist our hair and make our bodies rub together. We are full of the joy of battle, O wind!" Thus was the war waged between the forests and the wind. Then came the soft falling of leaves and the jubilant song of birds, and last of all came the gentle sea-song of the trees.

My host still sat at the piano, his head a little bent. I thought there was nothing more to come till I felt the most wonderful charm of all—the silence of woods. It was the silence of awakening life, the mad uprush of sap, the preparing of colour and perfume.

Then my friend rose with a gentle laugh. "Little children cannot be taught that music. No hitting of fingers, no laborious counting aloud, no practising of

five-finger exercises will teach that music. No man with shaggy hair, with small conservatories rearing the red-rimmed eyes can write about its technique. It is the oldest music in the world and the sweetest. What think you, Stranger?"

But he gave me no time to answer him, no time even to thank him. He was sitting once more in the chair opposite to me.

"What a pity it is," said he, "that so many scientists run in grooves and fly round with labels and paste whenever they want to chronicle a fact. I don't care who or what the man is, if he is going to be really great, he must have a keen imagination, in other words he must have a sense of poetry. The analytical is good in its way, but it is the long way and not the short way to knowledge. Darwin proved that mankind descended from monkeys, but he did not prove the missing link question. He left out of consideration the half-human stage, the satyrs, for instance, of ancient Greece. He called them myths. Myths are very often missing links"

"Your suggestion," I said, "is very ingenious, but you see nothing has ever been found to prove your theory. One skeleton of the upper part of a man and the lower part of a goat——."

I stopped suddenly. My host had quickly brushed back his hair from his forehead. I stared, leant forward, and then drew back with a sharp cry.

"Well, Stranger, what is it? Why don't you go on? What were your thoughts just then?"

"I thought," I said, my voice shaking a little "how much you resemble Pan. The thought was a foolish one, for Thamus, when sailing near Paxos, was

commanded by a mighty voice to proclaim, 'Pan is dead.'"

"Pan died in Arcadia, my Stranger," he replied, rising to his full height and showing his teeth in a malign and horrible smile. "Pan lives again to-night. *I am the great God Pan!*"

Days and weeks went by since my first visit to this strange man. I found myself constantly thinking about him. Sometimes I regarded him as a fanatic, a hopeless madman who had gone mad through loving Nature too well. At other times I was half inclined to believe his assertion. He certainly had abnormal powers, and, moreover, he bore a striking likeness to Pan as we popularly picture that God. But Pan of old was a sportsman and delighted in the chase. This new Pan wept over stolen eggs and babbled tenderly to flowers. My interest in the matter became so keen, that I eventually resolved to spend a night in the wood in the hope that I might see him.

On the night chosen I concealed myself between two boulders in such a way that I could see a certain clearing in the wood, and yet at the same time was not likely to be observed.

I sat hidden in this place for about two hours when I heard the sound of voices. Then I saw Pan slowly walking along with his arm round a slight, dark woman. Here was a comedy I had not bargained for! Pan in love with a Devonshire maid! Surely that would correct his madness, or, if you wish to be cynical, lead his madness into a more human and more easily understood channel.

They sat down against a tree, and I must confess I played the part of eavesdropper without very much shame.

There was a look of distress upon Pan's face. The woman caressed his hands and looked up at him with a smile from time to time.

"You tell me," the woman was saying, "that you love me and yet cannot, if you would, marry me."

"Even so, little one. You see you do not understand. There are voices calling me that you do not hear. There are people you cannot see waiting for me to play to them. Oh, the call of the woods and the caves and the mountains! Cannot you hear their voices? Now, now listen!"

"Dear dreamer, there is no sound save the wind and the cracking of twigs and the sound of running water."

"Ah!" exclaimed Pan with a long-drawn sigh. "You must try to forgive these vagaries. Draw close. Perhaps I may forget, shut out their voices, and only hear yours!"

Pan bent down and pressed the woman's face between his hands and kissed her on the mouth.

"Oh," said the woman softly, "what a night this is! You will put away your dreams and your fancies? I will serve you and make you always happy. I will bring sick birds for you to make well again. I shall be like a stream wandering through your life. It shall be there always for your refreshment. Drink deep at all times. You can never exhaust my love for you!"

Pan did not speak. I saw tears run down his cheeks. Twice his right hand went to his breast. The third time he drew out something and put it to his lips. I heard music sweeter than the song of birds. And all the time Pan wept—tears that fell into his pipes and made the notes tremulous.

I saw the woman quickly loose her hold. A look of intense fear came into her great eyes. Something strange and wonderful was happening. The woman watched it all, her body swaying to and fro. Then she uttered a shrill, piercing cry and rushed, as if possessed, through the trees and out of sight, one word ever upon her lips, shrieked out in awful terror—"Pan !"

It was Pan indeed. He had undergone a change. I saw his goat-beard swaying in the wind and horns jutting out from his forehead. His bare skin was hard and red, and the lower part of him was like a goat. Still he played, and the sound of his music became more sweet. And through the wood there echoed the wild mad cry of "Pan"; the woman shrieking the name with a darkened brain. And all the time Pan wept.

F. Hadland Davis

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Printer: Annie Besant: Vasanā Press, Adyar, Madras.
Publishers: Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India.

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